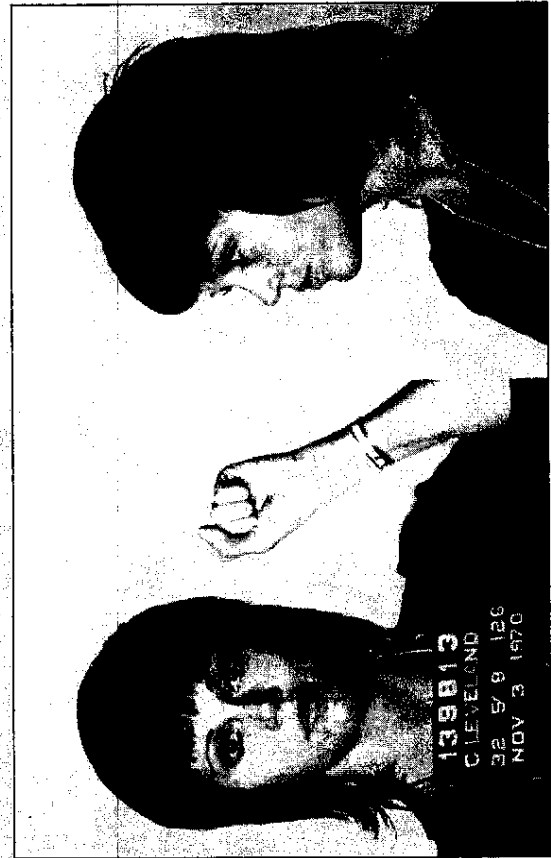


*I was always  
at meetings.*



*My mug shot.  
(AP/Wide World Photos)*

12:31

アサヒポラ

反戦女優  
ジーン・フオンダ  
(東京・沖縄)

中印国境の  
秘境ラダク  
(インド・ラダク)



Rita Martinson,  
Donald Sutherland, and me  
during the FTA show.



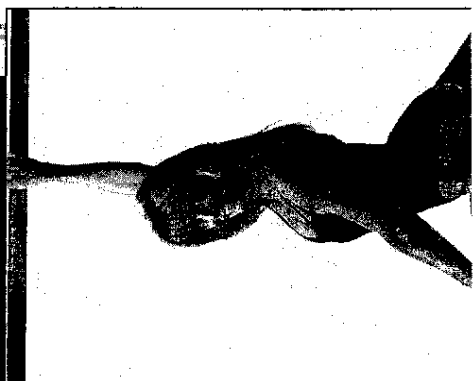
At Laurel Springs  
with Tom, Troy,  
Vanessa, and her  
dog, Manila.  
(© Steve Schapiro)



The night Tom won his race for the assembly.  
Left to right: Margot Kidder, Tom, me, Shirlee.  
(Barry E. Levine)



Talking . . . always talking  
to end the war.



The Workout.  
(Hansen, T. and J. and J.)

## CHAPTER ONE

1968

*If a butterfly flaps its wings in Brazil, it might produce a tornado in Texas. Unlikely as it seems, the tiny currents that a butterfly creates travel across thousands of miles, jostling other breezes as they go and eventually changing the weather.*

—EDWARD LORENZ

OKAY, SO I WAS WRONG. My life didn't peak, nor was it on the decline. But like everything else in the world, it was about to go through major changes. Looking back, I believe it now seems fated that I began my second act in 1968, perhaps the most turbulent, tumultuous year of the century. I was thirty, pregnant, and ripe. Everything in me was poised, like a sprinter at the starting line, twitching to move forward.

Things had been brewing for a while: I needed to make sense of life and feel I had a purpose. Filming *Barbarella* at a time when so much substantive change was taking place in the world had acted as yeast to my malaise. Who was I? What did I want from life? I am carrying life—what does this mean for me?

Change always holds an element of self-interest, and mine was quite simply that I wanted to be a better person. To switch to a gardening metaphor, it's possible that the seeds of my definition of "better" were gathered and planted way back when I saw my father's early movies: *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Ox-Bow Incident*, *Young Mr. Lincoln*. Stratified after thirty years, they were now waiting to sprout. My pregnancy during that fertile year—1968—created a rich loam.

*At the Oscars with Ted.  
At this point, he's the one  
in show business.  
(Michel Bourquard/Sills/  
Retna Ltd.)*



*Surveying the bison on Ted's ranch.*





At first the evidence offered by my pregnancy (that I was a woman, hence like my mother) had struck terror in my heart, but as time went by, the fear gave way to a strange peace. Peace was not something with which I was familiar. Perhaps the hormones of pregnancy were washing away my lifelong tendency to depression. But I think it was more than that. I believe that in facing and naming the terror I had felt at the start of my pregnancy, a healing process had been set in motion—a somatic realization that I was, in fact, a normal female. My always troublesome “down there” was doing what millennia of women’s down theres had done for them. I had conceived. In a way, I was pregnant with a baby and also with myself, connected by a primordial umbilical cord to other women—to all women past, present, and future; to the female spirit—interested in and needing to be with women more than men for the first time since adolescence. In fact, during my nine months of pregnancy I experienced being in *my body* for the first time since preadolescent girlhood. I would not be capable of sustaining that embodiment after pregnancy, but I would find it again later, in my third act.

I had never gone in much for watching television and was not one of the many Americans witnessing the developing Vietnam War from their living rooms. What attention I did give to it allowed me to remain comfortable in the belief that it was an acceptable cause—maybe not a “good war” like the one my father fought in; more of a fuzzy one, like the Korean War. But all that changed when the risk of miscarriage confined me to bed for the first three months of 1968. I saw images on French television showing damage caused by American bombers that, en route back to their aircraft carriers, unloaded bombs they hadn’t already dropped, sometimes hitting schools, hospitals, and churches. I was stunned.

Then, beginning in January during the celebration of Tet, Vietnam’s new year, the North Vietnamese and Vietcong launched a series of well-coordinated offensives in major cities throughout South Vietnam. It was shocking. For this to have been organized and carried out without the U.S. military and our allies having even a hint meant that the people we were calling the enemy was just about everybody. As I watched the Vietcong storm the grounds of the American embassy, it occurred to me that Vietnamese residents throughout Saigon must have participated: shop-

keepers, peddlers, farmers, laundresses. Later it was discovered that guns, ammunition, and grenades had been smuggled into the city in laundry and flower baskets. The words of General William Westmoreland, commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, claiming that he was close to ending the war, that he could see “a light at the end of the tunnel,” echoed grotesquely in light of what we were seeing on television. We, supposedly the mightiest military force in the world, had so lost ground that even after four years of warfare the enemy was able to attack us in our own embassy.

The psychological impact of such images was devastating. Everything was turned upside down. Who was strong? What did “military might” mean? *Who were we as Americans?* As I lay in bed contemplating what I was seeing, I remembered a morning in Saint Tropez. Vadim and I were having a leisurely breakfast on the balcony of our room at the Tahiti Hôtel when he opened the newspaper.

“*Ce n’est pas possible! Mais ils sont fous ou quoi?*” he exploded, jabbing his fingers at the front page. “Look at this. Your Congress must be out of their minds!” It was August 8, 1964, and French headlines blasted the news that Congress had just passed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. It gave President Johnson the power, for the first time ever, to bomb North Vietnam.

“There’s no way you can win a war in Vietnam!” Vadim continued with uncharacteristic passion.

I wanted to ask, “Where is Vietnam?” but I was too ashamed. I also wondered why he was so certain the United States couldn’t win, and I felt defensive. Sour grapes, I thought. Just because the French lost . . .

Now, with the grim reality of 1968 and the Tet offensive, it occurred to me that Vadim may have been right. But how could the United States lose to a country so small? And if a French filmmaker had known in 1964 that we couldn’t win, why did the American government fail to get it? It would take me four more years before I really understood why Vadim had been so certain, and a few years after that to begin to grasp the most disturbing question of all: why five administrations, from Truman to Nixon, *did* see that we couldn’t win and persisted anyway.

When the danger of miscarriage had passed, my sometime mentor Simone Signoret brought me with her to a huge antiwar rally in Paris.

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MY LIFE SO FAR

Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir were among the speakers. For the first time I felt embarrassed for my country, and I also wanted to go home. It was too painful being in France, hearing the criticisms, and not doing anything.

But what to do? I didn't like criticizing America while I was in another country. I'm not a dabbler. If I was going to oppose the war, it would be in the streets of America with my fellow countrymen, who, I could see on French television, were marching in growing numbers in the States. The dilemma for me was that this could never happen in the context of my marriage to Vadim. (In years to come, he would publicly disparage me as a "Jane of Arc.") While personally opposed to the Vietnam War, he was too cynical to commit himself to any movement to end it. Then, too, I knew that if I threw myself heart and soul into the anti-war effort, a return to the permissive, indolent life I shared with Vadim would be unthinkable.

Around this time I had an experience that, oddly enough, would never have happened had my beloved former stepmother Susan not come to Paris to check up on me during my pregnancy. At dinner one evening, a friend of hers introduced me to a nineteen-year-old fresh-faced kid named Dick Perrin, who turned out to be a U.S. Army resister from the First Battalion of the Sixty-fourth Armored Brigade, stationed in West Germany. This was my first encounter with a U.S. serviceman who was actively opposed to the war, and it was my introduction to what within two years would become a major focus of my activism: GIs against the war.

Dick talked to us about an organization he and other American army resisters had just formed, RITA (Resisters Inside the Army). RITA's goals were to spread anti-Vietnam War messages within the armed forces. Dick said that a soldier had the right, even the obligation, to disassociate himself from the military if he believed the war was wrong.

It seemed there was a growing underground network of American resisters and conscientious objectors in Europe. They were seeking employment and financial assistance. According to Dick in his book *G.I. Resister*, one of the "hideouts" for these resisters was a farmhouse southwest of Paris, near Tours. There Dick would drop off or pick up guys. He described how they sat at a fourteen-foot-long kitchen table

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where they could all eat together with the owner of the farm. This owner was a big, gentle American in bib overalls. Dick called him Sandy. Dick would gaze out the window onto the rolling farmland and see "crazy constructions that swung in the breeze and moved in nearly every direction." Dick said, "I had no name for them because I had never seen a mobile before, nor even heard of one."

Only later, sitting with his family in Canada watching "Sandy's" obituary being announced, did Perrin discover that their benefactor was none other than the great American sculptor Alexander Calder.

I had often been at that farmhouse with Sandy and his wife, but he never told me they were helping resisters, and I had never met one there.

After that dinner I saw Dick Perrin and several other GI resisters from time to time, helping them get dental care, passing on some of Vadim's clothes. I even invited them to a sneak screening of *Barbarella*, which would be released later that year. The young men with Dick described themselves as humanitarian rather than political and told how soldiers returning from Vietnam had joked about torturing Vietnamese prisoners. Yet, like me, they became defensive whenever a French person expressed criticism of America. At one of our encounters Dick gave me a book, *The Village of Ben Suc*, by Jonathan Schell. "Read this," he said, "and you'll understand." I went back to our farm and devoured the short book in one stunned sitting.

In it Schell described what happened in January 1967 during the largest U.S. military operation in Vietnam up to that time, Operation Cedar Falls. Having failed in its previous attempts to "pacify" the village of Ben Suc and the surrounding area known as the Iron Triangle, the American High Command had developed a new strategy: to bomb (including with B-52s) and shell the area for several days; then bring in ground troops, both American and our South Vietnamese allies from the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, to round up villagers and move them in trucks to a refugee camp. Bulldozers then leveled the village and the surrounding jungle, which was bombed again until no trace was left of what had once been a relatively prosperous farming village.

Perhaps it was the matter-of-factness of Schell's writing that made it so powerful. We learn with him how embedded the Vietcong were in the life of the village, providing a full governmental structure and protections and involving everyone in their programs; how the captive villagers deliberately allowed the American soldiers to continue in their

belief that the VC were a "roving band of guerrillas" who occasionally appeared out of the jungle and then disappeared again, rather than the governing body they clearly were. The reader comes to understand why the goal of "winning the hearts and minds" of refugees from Ben Suc was a grotesque joke. Schell quotes American lieutenant colonel Kenneth J. White, province representative for the Office of Civilian Operations, exclaiming as he looks at the resettlement camp for the first time, "This is wonderful! I've never seen anything like it. It's the best civilian project I've ever seen . . . you know, sometimes it just feels *right*."

I was shocked at Schell's account of the smugness of the high-level U.S. military officers who seemed to revel in Operation Cedar Falls' massive military destructiveness without seeming to consider the effects on civilians. In response to a question from Schell about civilian casualties of the bombing, one sergeant said, "What does it matter? They're all Vietnamese."

I closed the book. I knew that something fundamental in the general area of my heart had exploded and blown me wide open. I'm not sure how I had managed up until then to neatly compartmentalize my generic, liberal opposition to war and avoid knowing more about the realities of this particular one.

I felt sickened. Part of my identity had been that I was a citizen of a country that, in spite of its internal paradoxes, represented moral integrity, justice, and a desire for peace. My father had fought in the Pacific, and when he returned wearing a Bronze Star, I had been filled with pride. I sometimes cried when I sang "The Star-Spangled Banner." I had been "Miss Army Recruiter" in 1959. I was a believer. Reading Schell's *The Village of Ben Suc*, I felt betrayed as an American, and the depth of my sense of betrayal was in direct proportion to my previous depth of certainty about the ultimate rightness of any U.S. mission. I began telling everyone I knew about the book, and I was shaken by the we've-known-this-for-years, what-are-you-so-bothered-about? reaction I received from most people (including Vadim). I found it difficult to understand how they had known this and not done more to end it. But they were *French*. They'd ended *their* war in Vietnam. Ending it this time was our job, as Americans.

As I began to read more—including reports from the International War Crimes Tribunal—I began to wonder: Why had I not paid more attention and taken action sooner? It wasn't that I was lazy or lacked cu-

riosity. I think it had to do with giving up comfort—and I don't mean material comfort. I mean the comfort that ignorance provides. Once you connect with the painful truth of something, you then *own* the pain and must take responsibility for it through action. Of course, there are people who *see* and then choose to turn away, but then one becomes an accomplice. In *Galileo*, Bertolt Brecht wrote, "He who doesn't know is an ignoramus. He who knows and keeps quiet is a scoundrel." I'm a lot of things, but a scoundrel isn't one of them.

I wanted to act on what I was learning and feeling but didn't know what to do. I knew (without acknowledging to myself what I knew) that if I became involved, it would mean leaving Vadim; but I couldn't conceive of leaving him. Who would I be without him? I decided to go see Simone Signoret.

When I arrived at the bucolic country estate she and Yves Montand shared outside Paris, she was at the door to greet me. I could see in her face that she had been waiting for this to happen. Somehow, through all the silliness of my lifestyle, she had maintained a firm belief that what she loved about my father from his movie roles was waiting inside *me* to manifest itself through action. Sometimes I would catch her looking at me in such a deep way that I'd be tempted to look over my shoulder to see whom it was she was relating to—surely not me. It was her patience with me, the fact that she had never pushed or proselytized but had been content to put learning opportunities in my path, that told me I could trust her.

Bringing a bottle of fine cabernet and a platter of cheeses, she took me out to the back porch, where we ensconced ourselves in an arbor.

"I'm glad you read Schell's book. It's important," she said. She'd read it the previous year, when it had appeared as a series of articles in *The New Yorker*. I asked if she had been surprised by it.

"Yes and no," she answered. "We've known here for some time about your 'strategic hamlets' and the *bombardements de saturation* [saturation bombing], but never in such detail. It was the details that got to me. But remember, we were there before you, we French, and the attitudes that Schell describes the Americans having toward the Vietnamese—the total disregard, as though they aren't human beings—these were the same attitudes *les colonialistes Français* had. The difference is that we didn't need to try to hide it. Don't forget, back then most people still believed it was all right to have colonies, whereas in your country people need to believe



you've been *invited* in to protect a democracy." And she cocked her head at me and gave me a look that said "Who do they think they're kidding!"

"Explain it to me, Simone," I asked, ashamed to admit how much I didn't know.

"First of all, Jane, you need to know that at the end of World War Two, when France had to go to war to keep Vietnam as her colony, it was your country that paid most of our military expenses. *C'était monstrueux, n'est-ce pas?* The U.S. was supposed to be about independence, not colonialism."

"I didn't know this," I said quietly.

"Yes. The French couldn't have won alone, and colonialism is a terrible thing, Jane." She described how the French had manipulated the economy of Vietnam to benefit themselves, how they gave schooling only to the privileged but left most Vietnamese illiterate, how they had cultivated a bureaucracy of colonial wannabes from the Vietnamese upper classes and gave privileges to Vietnamese who agreed to convert to Catholicism.

"These are the kind of Vietnamese who support your so-called president Thieu right now," she said, "the same ones who supported us because they got power and privilege by identifying with the colonialists. Besides, they know there's a lot of money to be made off you Americans. Listen, Jane, these parasites are the people who allow you to believe that there are Vietnamese who want you there and who support Thieu. You had them during your own revolution. How did you call them?"

"Tories," I answered, beginning to understand things in a new way.

"Okay. You had Tories who supported the British. Did that make it a civil war?"

"No, it was a revolution."

"That's right. How can it be a civil war if one side is entirely paid for, trained by, and supported by a foreign nation?" She was getting worked up now. I liked Simone when she was worked up. "And you know who the Vietnamese revolutionaries thought of as the George Washington of their country? Ho Chi Minh. Americans are so blinded with anti-Communism that you don't even realize that most Vietnamese, including people who aren't Communists, still respect Ho as the founder of their country. He declared independence in 1945, for crying out loud! And when they had to fight France to keep their independence, Ho was certain he could count on the United States for help. You stood for national independence, that's what your wonderful father fought for in

World War Two. Do you know that Ho petitioned and begged President Truman to help them get their independence from France, but each time he tried, they ignored him? Think about it: If your country had paid attention back then, none of this would have happened. There didn't need to be a war." She stopped to sip her wine and let this sink in. I took notes.

"This president of yours, how stupid! He's 'not going to be the first president of the United States to lose a war,' " she said in a mock macho voice. "But you can't win it any more than we did! Why can't they get it through their heads?"

I told her about Vadim's reaction in 1964 when he heard about the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. "Well, he was right. There's no way. All your presidents have thought they were fighting to stop the Soviets and China when they were really up against homegrown revolutionaries with a cause they're willing to die for. They've been fighting outsiders who've tried to take it away from them for centuries, and they always win sooner or later. Your GIs and those soldiers in Thieu's army, they don't want to fight because they have no cause to believe in." She leaned forward and looked hard at me.

"Dad voted for Johnson. He was sure he would end the war."

"Your dad and I have had many fights about this. I love him dearly, but he's too gullible when it comes to your liberal establishment."

"I had no idea it was all such a lie. I feel so angry and betrayed."

"As well you should, my darling girl. Your country has been betrayed by its leaders. What are you going to do about it?"

"I don't know what to do, Simone. I want to go back to America, but . . ."

I had to stop because I didn't want to cry. She was silent for a while, waiting to see if I would go on. Then: "It's hard to do much when you're here in France, I understand."

"But I can't ask Vadim to move to the U.S. We've just spent all this money on our farm, I'm having this baby . . ."

"You're in a difficult situation." Then she paused for a moment. "Do you love him?"

"Yes," I said, with a little too much certainty, as women do when they're not sure but don't know it.

The sun had gone down and a chill was setting in when we carried our wine and the remains of the cheese into her kitchen. "Do you want to stay for dinner? I'm alone tonight."

"Vadim's meeting me in Paris. I'm sorry, and I've taken so much of your time already." She put her arms around me. "I'm so glad we talked." Then, with her hands on my shoulders and holding me away from her, she looked into my eyes. "Jane, you will know what to do when the right time comes. Right now, you go and get ready for that baby."

I could see her standing in the doorway waving to me as I drove off. At dinner I didn't tell Vadim why I'd gone to see Simone, and he never asked.

In April Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, and any hope that a nonviolent solution could be found to segregation and urban poverty went down in tears. Violence and uprisings were spreading around the world—from New York and Mexico to Prague and West Germany. In May, France's traditional month of demonstrations, students began a rebellion in Paris's Latin Quarter to protest unpopular reforms in higher education. They were met by police violence, and like a match to tinder, rebellion spread rapidly and unexpectedly throughout Paris and then into the provinces, launching what became known as Les événements de Mai, the Events of May. Ten thousand students battled police for fourteen hours on May 6, turning Paris into a city under siege. People poured into the streets, barricades were erected, the CRS (the French counterpart of the National Guard) responded with shocking brutality.

Just prior to the start of the revolt, Vadim had been elected president of the film technicians union, and he was required to go to Paris for union meetings. I insisted on coming with him, not wanting to be left barefoot and pregnant out on the farm while history was being made. What I saw was astonishing. Streets were being torn up, cars overturned and burned, trees cut down for barricades. People were bleeding from the blows of the police, from tear gas and fires. Friends of ours were thrown in jail, and articles appeared daily about the brutality of the CRS. Vadim's union meetings were filled to overflowing, fractious, and passionate.

Then, a countrywide general strike brought France to a virtual standstill. People, including me, began stockpiling canned food in anticipation that the strike would continue. The French stock market was set ablaze by rioters. To appease the strikers and avert a potential civil war, de Gaulle called for a general election and raised the minimum wage by

33.3 percent. Along with the fear of being killed or hurt, there was a feeling of excitement and possibility in the air: Maybe this unlikely coalition between students and workers could actually topple the Gaullist government and achieve the reforms they sought; maybe change was possible; maybe people didn't have to be powerless. The stirrings were contagious. It seemed to be a worldwide phenomenon.

By now even loyalist American businessmen were publicly expressing concern about the deficit spending of the war and what it was doing to Johnson's vision of eradicating poverty. Bobby Kennedy had already taken the position publicly that the Vietcong should be included at the negotiating table. Now his presidential campaign was said to be bringing a brave, fresh sense of possibility to blacks, blue-collar workers, and youth, and to those committed to ending the war. Everything depended on his winning the critical California primary. Vadim and I were listening to the returns on the radio and the results slowly coming in showed that he was winning. But in the morning came the horrific news that he, too, had been shot. It felt like the Apocalypse was upon us.

I was six months pregnant by now, and Vadim wanted to get me out of the city, so with another couple we rented a house by the sea in Saint Tropez. The fact that the husband was an opium addict (and had a young girlfriend there as well as his wife) added to the alienation I was feeling. It probably wouldn't have affected me as much as a year or two earlier. I would have shrugged it off as part of the dark side of life with Vadim. But now it caused me to retreat into my own world, encapsulated in the cocoon of my pregnancy. I spent most of my time floating on an inflatable raft in the pristine Mediterranean waters, my big belly curving toward the sun, reading (incongruously) *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. It rocked me to my core. Malcolm's story opened a window onto a reality I had ignored. But the greatest revelation the book brought me was the possibility of profound human transformation. I was spellbound by his journey from the doped-up, numbers-running, woman-beating, street-hustling, pimping Malcolm Little to a proud, clean, literate, Muslim Malcolm X who taught that all white people were the Devil incarnate—to his final, spiritual transformation in Mecca. There he met white people from all over the world who received him as a brother, and he realized that "white," as he had been using the word, didn't mean skin color as much as it meant attitudes and actions some whites held toward non-whites—but that not all whites were



racist. At the time of his murder, he was anything but the hate-monger portrayed in the American press. Somehow, through the horrors that had been his life, he had become a spiritual leader. How had this been possible?

That summer in Saint Tropez I began to search my soul to see which kind of white person I was. While theoretically I didn't think I was racist, I hadn't had enough contact with black people to know with certainty. That would change. Malcolm had allowed me for the first time to have a glimpse into what racism feels like to a black man. What I was not ready to acknowledge was how the black women in his life were viewed as mostly irrelevant, voiceless, subservient. It's hardest to see what's wrong about what seems normal.

Those two books that I'd read within months of each other, *The Village of Ben Suc* and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, made me feel more uncertain than ever about lasting in Vadim's world. If someone like Malcolm could transform himself, so could I. I didn't want to die without making a difference. But still I could not see myself alone, without Vadim—not only because I was going to have a baby, but because I didn't feel I could survive on my own.

In July I was sent a script of *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* It was based on a book of the same name by Horace McCoy. I was unfamiliar with the book, but Vadim had always loved it. The novel was a favorite among French leftists, who viewed it as the first true American existential novel. The script wasn't very good, but Vadim was adamant that I do it, saying it could be a very important movie. I accepted. It was to begin shooting three months after my September due date.

We returned to Paris at the end of August and were invited to the American embassy to watch the Democratic National Convention in Chicago nominate Hubert Humphrey for president. When it was announced that Humphrey (who had not come out in opposition to the war) had won the nomination, Ambassador Sargent Shriver said, "They just put Richard Nixon in the White House." Cutting away from the vote proceedings, the television cameras took us into the streets of Chicago, where thousands of essentially peaceful protesters were being beaten bloody and teargassed by Mayor Richard Daley's police; 668 people were arrested.

Little did I know that one of the leaders of the protests, Tom Hayden, would one day be my husband.

I was due to give birth in a month. Wanting to have a natural delivery, I had attended a number of Lamaze classes in Paris but was unconvinced that the rapid panting would succeed in alleviating the pain of contractions, so I quit. In those days you couldn't determine the child's sex beforehand, but I hoped it would be a girl. I'd come up with a perfect girl name: Vanessa. Vanessa Vadim. I liked the alliteration. I also thought of the name because of my fascination with Vanessa Redgrave—not just because she's a transcendent actor, but because she is strong and sure of herself and was the only actress I knew who was a political activist, though I didn't know the particulars of her politics. I remember reading a magazine article about her that said she went to bed studying Keynesian economic theory!

A room was reserved for me at a fashionable private clinic on the outskirts of Paris, where Catherine Deneuve had given birth to her son, Christian. I woke up at our farm at 5:00 on a morning close to my due date and thought I was dying. The pain was beyond anything I had imagined, and I assumed something was wrong: Where was the slow buildup, the water breaking, the slight contractions to signal it was time to go to the hospital? Vadim raced to the clinic with me writhing in agony and scared to death. We ran out of gas about a half mile before reaching the clinic, and Vadim had to carry me the rest of the way. By 6:00 A.M. I was on an operating table starting to efface, with a gas mask over my face. It felt like a rape. As I went under, I remember thinking that it wasn't supposed to be like this. Forceps were shoved up me, a man's voice came from far away, telling me to push, and then I was out. I was unconscious for my child's birth.

It was almost 8:00 A.M. when I came to, alone in the recovery room, groggy, hurting, wondering what had happened. I turned my head and saw a baby all wrapped up, lying in a bassinet alongside my bed. Was it my baby? Was it a boy or girl? I felt woozy and dozed back to sleep. Then the doctor came in and told me it was a girl. Vanessa. He was wearing riding jodhpurs (he'd been prepared to go fox-hunting when called to the hospital), and he showed me his finger, claiming I had bitten it hard during delivery. *Good!*

"Is the baby normal?"

"Yes," he assured me.

"Why did you give me gas?"

"Because you were in such pain," he answered defensively.

"But . . ." I wanted to tell him that he should have asked me first, and how much I had wanted to have a natural birth. It turns out that the hateful doctor in jodhpurs had really torn me up with the forceps, though later I was told by the nurses that forceps hadn't been necessary.

I asked to have the baby given to me, and for a long time I lay there looking at her. I felt exhausted, depressed, and angry. I was moved to a fancy room and nurses brought the baby to me when she was to be fed and then took her away somewhere. I asked if she could stay with me, and they told me no. Assuming the nurses knew better than I did, I never argued.

Vadim brought Nathalie to visit, but the nurses said they didn't allow children in the room because they "carried germs," so Nathalie had to stand outside with her little face pressed against my window peering in.

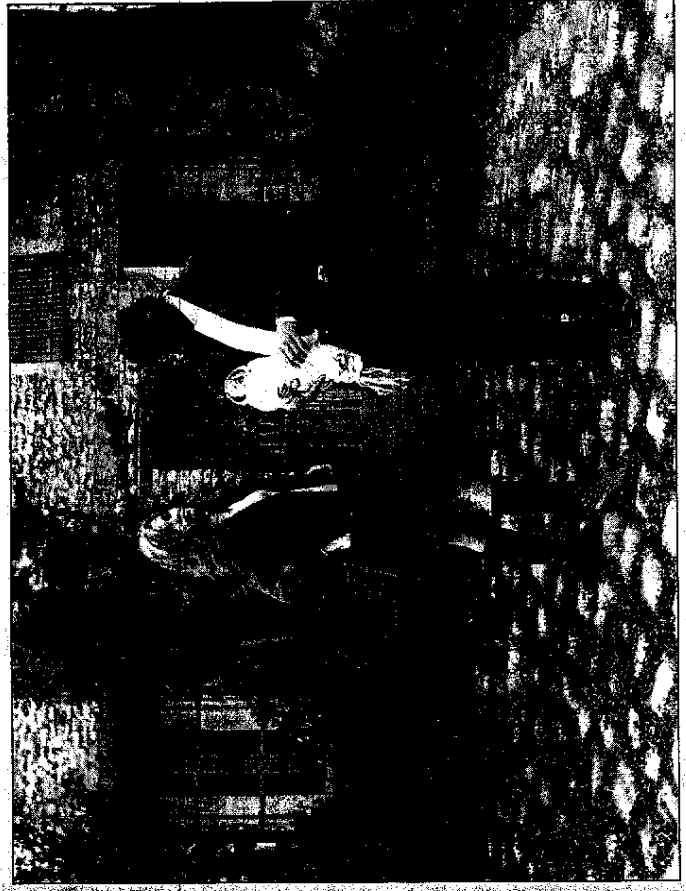
As it happened, September 28, Vanessa's birthday, was also Brigitte Bardot's birthday. Brigitte had predicted this would be the case and sent me a cabbage with a card that read, "In France, babies are delivered in cabbages, not by the stork." Some friends came to see me—and they're the ones who brought me germs, not Nathalie. I got sick and the nurses wouldn't let me breast-feed for a while, for fear I'd give whatever I had to Vanessa. I liked the feeling of milk coming into my breasts. I liked having breasts! I liked that, for a while, the first thing to go through a doorway wasn't my nose.

After several days I was able to get up. I wanted to lose the weight I'd gained in time for the upcoming film, so I started doing ballet pliés in the bathroom. But this caused me to hemorrhage, which meant I had to stay in the hospital for a week, seeing Vanessa only when they'd bring her to me to feed. *Stuck in a hospital. Sick, like my mother!* I was miserable. I did breast-feed a little, but the nurses were giving Vanessa supplements (without asking me), so it wasn't altogether successful—which made me feel I was already failing as a mother.

After a week Vadim came to take us home. There were paparazzi outside the clinic taking pictures, some of which I still have. I am looking down at the baby in my arms, and the uncertainty on my face reflects something that Adrienne Rich wrote in her book about motherhood, *Of Woman Born*, "Nothing could have prepared me for the realization that I was a mother . . . when I knew I was still in a state of uncreation myself."



Holding Vanessa in the French clinic.  
(Gamma)



A friend had recommended a cockney nanny named Dot Edwards, who had flown in from London and was waiting at the farm when we arrived. She took over the responsibilities of caring for Vanessa, just as nannies had cared for me and my brother. Wasn't it the way things were done? I went to bed and cried for a month (like my mother), not knowing why. I felt that the floor had dropped out from under me. Vanessa knew it, I swear. She knew something was wrong and would cry whenever she was with me. Dot said it was colic, but I knew better.

In trying to understand my mother and how her state of mind at my birth might have affected me, I have learned a lot about postpartum depression: how, after the birth of a child, not just the body but the psyche is opened to the reliving of early, unresolved injuries; how these "memories" can penetrate to the deepest psychic fault line, causing profound grief. Perhaps after Vanessa's birth I was reexperiencing the sadness and aloneness I had felt as an infant. But, of course, nobody knew much of anything about PPD back then, so instead of seeing my depression as a not-so-unusual phenomenon (exacerbated by the horrid forceps), I just felt that I had failed—that nothing was turning out the way it was supposed to, not the birth, not the nursing, not my feelings for my child or (it seemed) hers for me. I don't know how women with PPD manage to cope when they can't afford the kind of help I had in Dot. I think this is partly why I would later find myself focusing on working with young, poor mothers and their children.

Unable to nurse successfully, I gave up and turned to Adelle Davis (the first mainstream health food proponent) for advice about what a baby should drink.

When Vanessa was three months old we went to Hollywood, where I began preparations for *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* I took my baby to a traditional pediatrician in Beverly Hills and told him that I was concerned because she was always throwing up.

"What formula are you giving her?" the doctor asked.

"Well, what Adelle Davis recommends," I answered. "Dessicated baby veal liver, cranberry juice concentrate, yeast, and goat's milk. Of course we have to make the holes in her bottle larger. . . ."

He was speechless for a moment, then he broke out laughing.

I switched to Similac formula, again feeling that I'd failed.

## CHAPTER TWO

# THEY SHOOT HORSES, DON'T THEY?

*It is hard work to control the workings of inclination and turn the bent of nature; but that it may be done, I know from experience. God has given us, in a measure, the power to make our own fate.*

—CHARLOTTE BRONTË,  
*Jane Eyre*

THE ORIGINAL WRITER/DIRECTOR OF *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* was fired and replaced by a young director named Sydney Pollack, who called to ask if he could come over and discuss the script with me. I remember sitting with Sydney at our house and his asking me what I thought the script problems were and would I read the original book carefully and then talk with him about what was missing in the adaptation. Wonderful Sydney had no idea what this meant to me. Naturally I had discussed script problems with Vadim on the movies we had made together, but this was different. This was a director who was actually seeking my input. It was a germinal moment. I began to study the book in ways I hadn't before—identifying moments that seemed essential not just to my character but to the movie as a whole, making sure everything I did contributed to the central theme. This was the first time in my life as



an actor that I was working on a film about larger societal issues, and instead of my professional work feeling peripheral to life, it felt relevant.

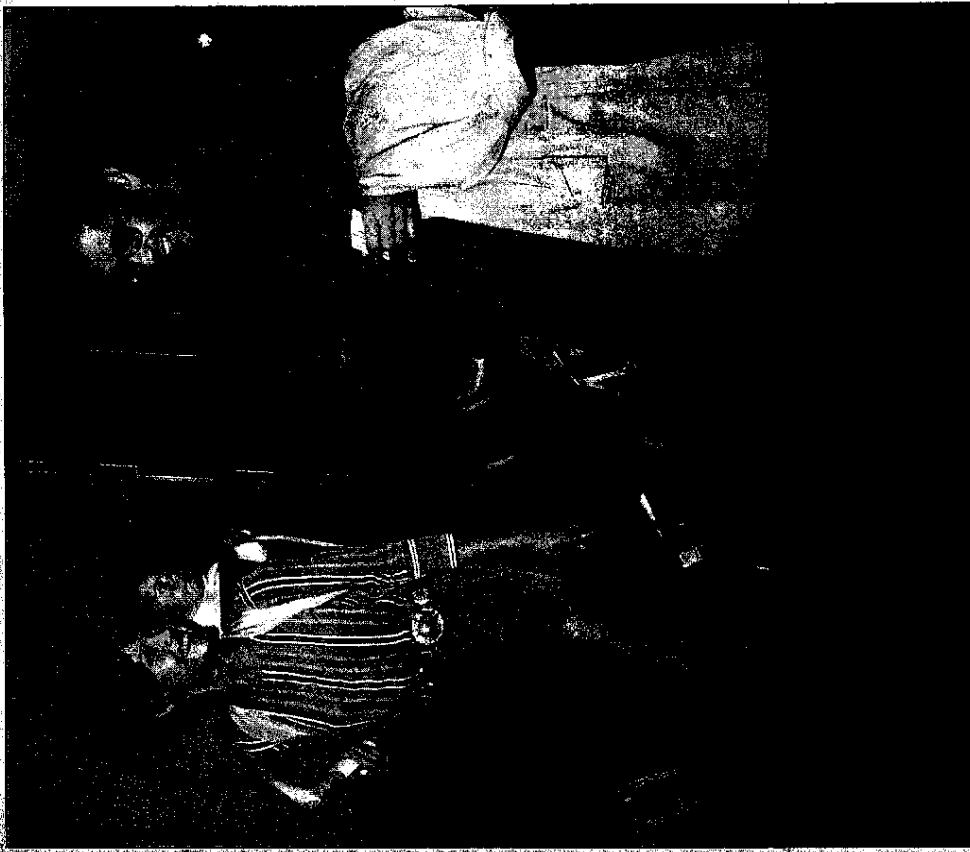
*They Shoot Horses* was an existential story that used the marathon dances of the Depression era as a metaphor for the greed and manipulateness of America's consumer society. The entire story took place in a ballroom on the Santa Monica Pier, a place that had been a part of my childhood, where marathon dances had actually been held. During the Depression contestants in the marathons, hoping to win prizes, would dance until they literally dropped from exhaustion, while crowds of people sitting on bleachers would cheer their favorite couples and thrill at the sight of dancers collapsing, hallucinating, going crazy—like spectators at the Roman Colosseum watching Christians being thrown to the lions. From time to time there would be a race around the ballroom to wear the contestants down and speed up the eliminations. After several hours the dancers would get a ten-minute rest break, and then they'd go back out on the floor.

The ballroom had been re-created on a sound stage. Red Buttons would be my partner for several scenes. He and I decided to see what it felt like to dance on the set until we couldn't stand up, as we would in the movie. We were more or less fine for a day or so, then we got so tired we had to hold each other up as we shuffled around. Neither Red nor I could understand how people had gone on for weeks at a time. After two days I began hallucinating. My face was right up against Red's cheek, and when I opened my eyes I could see every pore of his skin; I realized that although he was a good deal older than me, his skin was remarkably young.

When we'd decided we'd had enough, that it was time to go home, I told him how impressed I was with his skin, and he told me it was due to a nutritionist, Dr. Walters, in the San Fernando Valley.

I promptly made an appointment to see the doctor, who gave me a thorough examination, which included taking samples of my hair and skin. A week or so later he put me on a complicated regimen of vitamin supplements, gave me a lot of little plastic jars to keep them in, and told me to mark each with "B," "L," and "D," for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. (I tell you this because those little plastic jars will resurface and get me into a lot of trouble!)

The film was a turning point for me, both professionally and personally. Sydney, having been an actor himself, is a wonderful actor's direc-



*On the Ile de France in 1969. I'm wearing a wig, and Dot is following just behind Vadim.  
(AFP/Getty Images)*

tor, and with his guidance I probed deeper into the character and into myself than I had before, and I gained confidence as an actor.

But as I grew stronger I felt a parallel weakening of my marriage, a growing dissatisfaction, and less willingness to swallow the hurt that Vadim's drinking and gambling—not to mention the threesomes—caused me. But the idea of actually leaving him was still too hard to confront. I didn't want to be alone. I still felt that it was my relationship with him, however painful, that validated me. What will I be without him? I won't have any life. I had put so much into creating a life with him, fitting into *his* life, that I'd left myself behind. But who was "myself"? I wasn't sure. And now we had this little girl together, and there was Nathalie, and the home I'd created and all those trees I'd planted. In addition to everything else, a divorce felt like such an admission of—yes—failure. And I'd wanted so much to do better than my dad at marriage.

One day I was driving to the studio and, without noticing, ended up hours to the north, without knowing how I got there. I was having a mini breakdown, I think. Naturally I drew on my real-life anguish for all it was worth to feed my role as Gloria, the suicidal character in the movie who asks her dance partner to shoot her, the way they shoot horses with a broken leg.

I would spend days and nights living at the studio instead of going home to Malibu, partly because I wanted to enhance my identification with Gloria's hopelessness and partly because I just didn't want to go home to Vadim. I had a playpen set up in my dressing room and would have Dot bring Vanessa to me so I could feed her and sing to her. I knew only one lullaby from my own childhood, so I got a record of all the best lullabies and memorized them all. Then I would sing them one after the other to her (she sings them to her children now). In spite of my feelings of failure as a mother, giving birth—and to a *girl*—made me feel more connected to life and to femaleness in a way that was all my own, not a reflection of my husband. Even my body seemed to fall into a new, more graceful alignment.

One of the actors on the film was Al Lewis, who'd become famous as Grandpa in *The Munsters* on television. He would spend hours in my dressing room talking about social issues, and in particular about the Black Panther Party. Marlon Brando had taken up their cause and Al thought that I should, too. I remembered the conversations back in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, while filming *Hurry Sundown*, when I'd first

As Gloria in  
They Shoot Horses,  
Don't They?  
(Photofest)



Sydney Pollack directing Horses.  
Behind him, left to right: me, Red Buttons, and

learned about black militants. Al talked to me about the Panthers who'd been killed in Oakland, how others were being framed and put in jail with unreasonably high bail, and how Brando was helping to raise bail money and get lawyers.

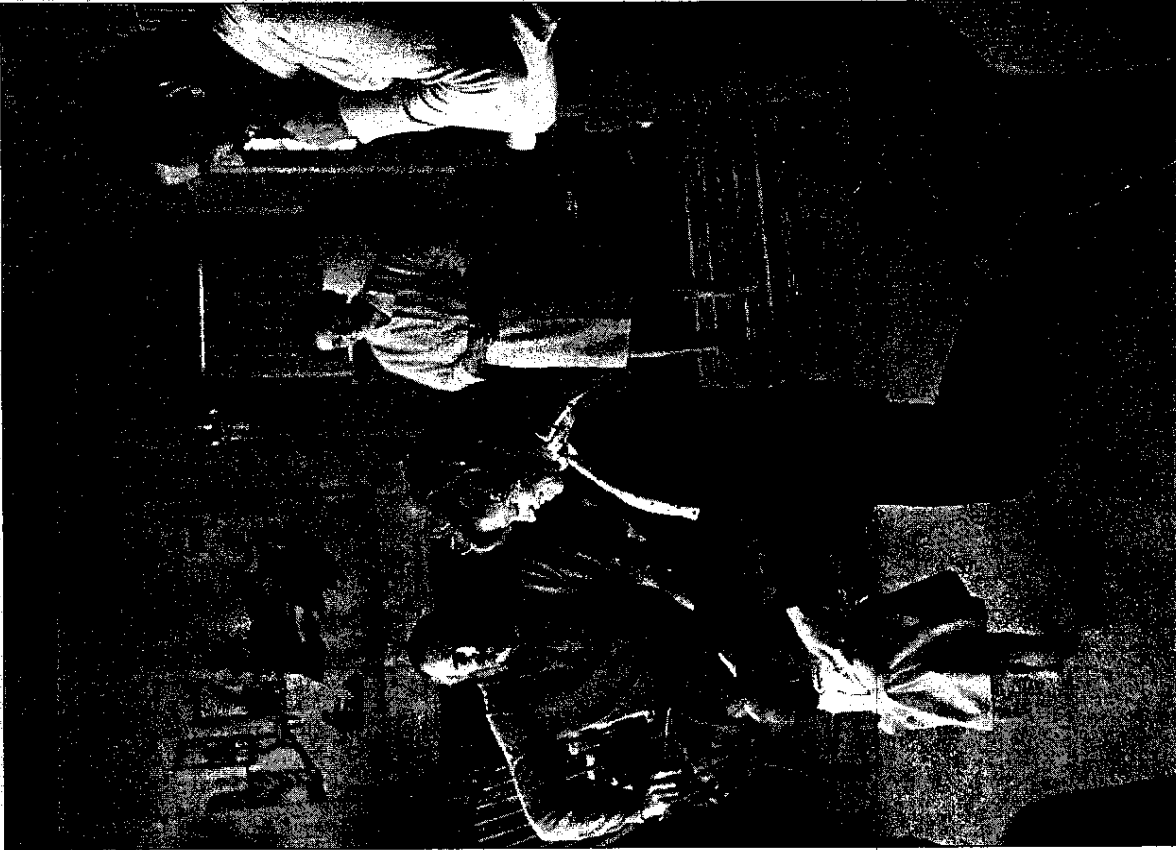
I listened, storing things up. Making no moves.

When the filming was over we went to New York, where I found my way to Vadim's hair stylist in the Village, Paul McGregor. There I had my first deep hair epiphany. Hair had ruled me for many years. Perhaps I used it to hide behind. The men in my life liked it long and blond, and I had been a blonde for so long that I didn't even know what my own color actually was. I simply said to Paul McGregor, "Do something," and he did. It was the haircut that became famous in *Klute*, the shag, and he dyed my hair darker, like what it really was. I didn't look as if I were trying to imitate Vadim's other wives anymore—I looked like me! I knew right away that I could do life differently with this hair.

Vadim sensed immediately that my cutting my hair was the first volley in my move for independence, though he did little more than grumble about it. It was during this time of making *They Shoot Horses* that director Alan Pakula sent me the script of *Klute* with a wonderful character named Bree Daniel. I immediately agreed to do it the following year.

My new haircut and I returned to France with Vadim and Vanessa. There I remained for the good part of a year, swinging with Vanessa in a hammock between two of the large trees I'd planted, trying to be a mother but not really knowing how. Parenting, I discovered, doesn't necessarily come naturally. I realized much later that I was parenting the way I'd been parented, taking care of all the externals but not countenancing the personhood of my baby. There is one especially powerful memory. It is late at night; I can't get Vanessa to sleep; I am despondent, again deep into the bulimia; I am lying on my back on the floor, with Vanessa lying on my chest. She lifts her head and looks straight into my eyes for what seems like an eternity. I feel she is looking into my soul, that she *knows* me, that she is my conscience. I get scared and have to look away. I don't want to be known.

I was at the country estate of my best girlfriend, Valarie Lalonde, when this happened. Part American, part British, ten years younger than me, Valarie was fun and smart and had a great giggle. She'd swing in the hammock with Vanessa and me and make Vadim mad because she was very pretty but liked me better than him. We have remained



Dad visiting us in Malibu during *Horses*.  
That's Dot hovering in the background.  
(Bob Willoughby/MPTV.net)



friends all these years, and recently I asked what her memories were of that time. Her first comment was that I was "upstairs a lot." Yes, of course I was—pretending to be sick so I could have time by myself. In addition, I was still actively bulimic, although no one knew. No one ever knew. It wasn't difficult to hide—especially since no one was really paying attention: I would simply leave the table, go upstairs, purge whatever I had eaten, and come back down again, all chipper and lively. Since the act of purging is somewhat orgasmic, the chipper part was easy. The difficulty would set in within twenty or thirty minutes, when a precipitous drop in blood sugar would flood me with fatigue and necessitate a physical and emotional withdrawal.

I watched how every minute of Vanessa's days seemed filled with discovery, as mine had been when I was little. Time, the most valuable thing of all, where was it going? It was withering away, and I was becoming a not a grape of wrath—grapes are full and juicy. No, I was becoming a raisin of wrath, shriveled on the vine. I had to do *something*. So I did what I have always tended to do when confused and at a turning point: I go as far away from what's familiar as possible, in the belief that somehow the miraculous power of strange faces and foreign climes will reveal me to myself, force me to examine how much of my problem I brought with me and how much I can honestly blame on my current context.

A lot of people who seemed to be on a search for "inner truth" were going to India and coming back with what sounded like answers: Mia Farrow and the Beatles, for instance. So off I went with a small duffel bag to New Delhi.

I was shocked at what I encountered. Until then poverty was just a word to me. I had never before been to a third-world country. I soon realized that not everyone saw what I was seeing. When I told the young Americans I occasionally ran into how appalled I was by the poverty, they would say that I "just didn't understand India"; that I was bringing my bourgeois (there it was again) notions to a country where they weren't applicable; that I was missing the point if I thought the people were miserable; that their religion lifted them above "such things." Finally I met some Americans who were with the Peace Corps, digging wells, helping out. They understood my reaction—after all, that was why they were there, to help. I briefly considered joining them, but I was almost ten years older than them, and also I couldn't imagine bringing Vanessa to India while I worked with the Peace Corps.

Ultimately, in some ways my trip did "reveal me to myself." It taught me that I wasn't a hippie; that given a choice, I'd dig wells rather than go to an ashram or space out on dope. Hey, it's no secret that I've smoked pot. I've tried most everything that doesn't require piercing the skin. But except for alcohol, nothing has ever caught on with me. Basically I like life on the natch too much. Besides, it's not possible to *make things better* when you're spaced out.

I flew directly from New Delhi to Los Angeles, where I was scheduled to promote *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* It was nighttime when I got to the room Vadim had reserved for us at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Talk about a rough transition!

I woke up in the morning with the cacophony of India still ringing in my ears, the odors of India still in my nose—and when I opened the curtains and looked out the window onto the quiet streets of Beverly Hills, I thought, My God, where is everybody? Has there been a plague? So clean. So empty. I had to struggle to remember that this was how it had always been, and it had seemed normal back then. But now I looked at the lavishness of the place with new eyes, and I was disturbed. How could we live this way when there were New Delhis in the world?

By now Vadim and I both knew that the woman who showed up in that hotel room was no longer his wife. I had moved out psychically. And it was for good.

Marriages end in stages, and it has nothing to do with a piece of paper. Part of mine had ended years earlier, when we weren't even married yet, but I'd plowed along in deep denial. Denial can be a pathology or a survival mechanism—and sometimes it's both. I had felt I needed the structure of our marriage to keep me from . . . vaporizing. *I am with him, therefore I exist*. And the newness of our being together had still permitted passion and romance. Then there was the stage when I'd grown numb and abandoned my body—yet keeping up the routine was the only thing that seemed possible, since the alternative still had me falling down a dark hole. After six years I had begun to see a faint outline of a me without him. This had ushered in a feisty period, when I dipped my toes a few times into the uncertain waters of independence—cutting my hair, going to India, having a romance of my own. (In a rare fit of discretion I won't name him.) But by the time all this occurred, the marriage to Vadim was no longer emotionally viable, at least not for me. Vadim may have been able to continue with the status quo, but I

couldn't. Yet I discovered that you have to watch out for extramarital romances. *You* are raw, and *he* is usually inappropriate. But the relationship can take on an unwarranted and intense place in your lonely heart simply because of its juxtaposition to your marriage. Fifteen years or so later, when Vadim gave me the manuscript of *Bardot, Deneuve, Fonda*, I was flabbergasted to find that he had portrayed himself as the faithful husband, cuckolded by *me* at the end of our marriage. I said, "Vadim, come on! How can you write that without saying what *you* had been doing all during our marriage! You're being hypocritical!" That did it. For Vadim, being called a hypocrite was almost as bad as being called bourgeois! He did some rewriting on his book, which acknowledged (barely) that he had regularly played around on me—but I was still made to look like the principal transgressor. I found this interesting, since Vadim never admitted to jealousy and would have sworn on his life that *he* didn't hold to a double standard.

Vanessa was only a year old when I told Vadim that I wasn't sure I could keep putting energy into trying to save what I suspected wasn't salvageable. A callus had formed around my heart, perhaps to protect me from feeling the pain of self-betrayal: betrayal of my own body (participating in threesomes in order to please him and show I wasn't a bourgeoisie) and betrayal of my own heart (staying with him when I no longer respected him). But while my love for him had grown numb, new parts of me were waking and reaching for the light. Those were the instincts I wanted to follow.

In the winter of 1969, *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* was released. Pauline Kael reviewed the film:

*Jane Fonda . . . has been a charming, witty nudie cutie in recent years and now gets a chance at an archetypal character. . . . Fonda goes all the way with it, as screen actresses rarely do once they become stars. . . . Jane Fonda stands a good chance of personifying American tensions and dominating our movies in the seventies. . . .*

This review of my professional work seemed to be eerily emblematic of the changes that were rocking my personal life.

## CHAPTER THREE

# COMING HOME

*It may be that the satisfaction I need  
depends on my going away, so that when I've gone  
and come back, I'll find it at home.*

—RUMI,

"In Baghdad, Dreaming of Cairo:  
In Cairo, Dreaming of Baghdad"

*Though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset  
is to ensure sterility.*

—E. M. FORSTER,  
*Howards End*

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG for me to realize that this was a new country, the America I'd come home to, as different from the place I'd left as I was from the me who used to live here.

Looking back, I see that it was more than America I was coming home to; I was coming *home*. It wasn't a hotel or rented house I chose; I took Vanessa and Dot and moved into the first-floor servants' quarters of my father's spacious Spanish colonial residence in Bel-Air. At the time I thought of it as a way to save money, but in retrospect I realize that it was more than that. I needed a safe haven, a place to regroup. Vadim's family—my ten-year-old stepdaughter, Nathalie; Vadim's mother; his sister, Hélène; his niece—they had been my family. Now, suddenly, I was alone but not emotionally anchored enough to be "out there," family-less. For a while, anyway, living in my father's home provided me with the roots I have always sought, a nest from which to fly and return. There I could figure out who I was now—post-Vadim.

Dad's way of relating to me, however, made this a little complicated. When I was married Dad treated me as a grown-up. Now that I was single again with no man to validate me, I became the little girl for whom he felt responsible and whom he seemed unable to respect or take seriously. In the months I was in his house we skirted each other politely, assessing the lay of each other's land, bumping up against each other on more than one occasion. Yet it was perfect. He provided a familiar landmark from which I could gauge how far I'd come from where I'd started.

In time I would discover a new "family" of people whose lives seemed to be motivated by the desire to create a better world. It would be a motley crew: black radicals, a former Green Beret, human-rights lawyers, soldiers, Native Americans. I wasn't always sure what they thought of me. But I wanted to learn from them and become someone who had my own narrative, my own direction.

They were, of course, all men.

Shirlee recently told me that Dad was happy when I became a mother. "Maybe now she'll see how hard it is to be a working parent," he'd told her during the time I was living with them. He hoped this would help me forgive him his parental shortcomings—which I have, many times over.

But it wasn't my being a "working parent" that caused me to be an inadequate mother. Had I been a stay-at-home mom, I might have been an even worse parent: I just didn't have it to give. I wasn't given it, I don't think my parents were, and I wasn't able to break that cycle of disconnect until later in my children's lives. What I *did* manage to do was marry men who were good fathers and provide surrogate adult support systems to fill in the gaps. Breaking the cycle requires that there be *someone*—the other parent, a grandmother, a loving nanny, a surrogate parent—who consistently gives unconditional love to the child. A child with even a modicum of this kind of loving will be better equipped to be a good parent to her or his own child and thus break the cycle. Today Vanessa is a remarkable parent to her two children. I attribute this to her father and to Catherine Schneider, the woman Vadim married after me. And as we went along, I learned some things that have made me a better mother and grandmother.

There is another way to break the pattern of parental disconnect, and that is to be taught *how* to parent. Relational skills are not static. They

can be taught, especially during the super-receptive time when a woman is expecting; I know this because I have seen it happen. The gift of good parenting is something that the organization I founded in Georgia in 1995—the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention—teaches disadvantaged young mothers. I have seen how being a good mother is a transforming, empowering experience for a young woman—and how it gives her child a protective resiliency. *I'm proof that you teach what you need to learn.*

Having lived abroad for so many years, I had few close friends in California, and none with children Vanessa's age. I was lonely. Sometimes I would swim with her in my father's pool or I'd take her to the beach house that Vadim had rented and we'd play in the sand. When I was away (which would begin to happen more frequently as my activism increased), she and Dot would live at the beach with him. On weekends I would load Vanessa into my backpack and walk with Vadim along the ocean's edge. He was now seeing someone new, but we wanted to be friends and it wasn't difficult. I was happy to spend time with Vadim because he was almost always affable, and having him in my life gave me a sense of continuity.

But it wasn't only because the marriage was over that I had come home. I was back because I felt compelled to join those who were working to end the war. En route to that joining, however, my attention was drawn to the recent Native American occupation of the island of Alcatraz, a former federal prison in San Francisco Bay no longer used by the government. The goal was to turn the island into an Indian cultural center and bring national media attention to the realities of Indian life: the high rates of unemployment, the low incomes, the high number of deaths from malnutrition and teen suicide; the short life expectancies.

I hadn't thought about Indians since my childhood days, when I incessantly played cowboys and Indians and asked God to give me an Indian brother. I decided I had some catching up to do and went straight to Alcatraz to find out what was going on. Altogether there must have been a hundred people from many different tribes on the island. Some were older, traditional Indians from reservations; some were student activists from the city. One student, La Nada Means Boyer, a twenty-two-year-old Bannock, became a friend and taught me much about what Native



people were facing. She would visit me at Dad's house, where her two-year-old son, Daynon, played with Vanessa, and I brought her with me on a national talk show. I wanted more Americans to know what I was learning.

With the help of La Nada and other Indians I met along the way, I learned about the different strategies the federal government was using to rob Indians of the sovereign control that had been guaranteed them over the rich uranium, coal, oil, natural gas, timber, and other resources that lay beneath the ground within their fifty million acres of reservation. It was an important moment for me. Indians had leaped from the cobwebs of old myths and fantasies into a painful present that made me reexamine what my government was doing—much as the book *The Village of Ben Suc* had done two years earlier.

Alcatraz was also a watershed experience for Native people. There young Indians learned from indigenous leaders to value their traditional ways, to understand their lives in a historical context (which, I've subsequently discovered, is always a radicalizing experience for people who are oppressed). *It's not just me. It's the system.* A then young woman named Wilma Mankiller, for instance, described the Alcatraz experience as a personal turning point, saying that the leaders there "articulated principles and ideas I had pondered but could not express." Eventually this led her back to her people, the Cherokee, where in 1987 she was elected the first female principal chief in Cherokee history, serving three terms.\*

One of the qualities that most attracts me to Native people is their attachment to the land. For them the earth is their mother, the sky their father. This has been kept alive in their collective memory through millennia by a tradition of oral history. Wilma Mankiller told me that when a Navajo code talker from World War II was asked how he could help defend a country that had treated his people so badly, he answered, "It's the land. We are attached to this land."

Within weeks of my Alcatraz trip, I engaged in my first act of public protest. Several Indians I had met at Alcatraz asked me to come to Fort Lawton in Washington State, which they were planning to occupy. It too was closing, and it was being turned into a park, and inspired by Al-

\*The Cherokee Nation is the largest tribal government in the U.S., with membership over 350,000.



*Vadim visiting Vanessa and me in my father's house.  
We had separated but were still good friends.*

(© 1970 Julian Wasser)

catraz, Indians wanted to make it into a cultural center. I felt I couldn't say no. I marched with 150 of them and was subsequently arrested, for the first time.

It was not a Vietnam War protest but my trips to Alcatraz and Fort Lawton that morphed me from a noun to a verb. A verb is active and less ego-oriented. Being a verb means being defined by action, not by title.

During these first few months in California, I also decided to act on my long-standing curiosity—piqued by Al Lewis on the set of *They Shoot Horses*—about the Black Panther party. I met some of the leadership, visited their free clinics and hot breakfast programs for children. (Little did I know that one day a girl who had benefited from the Panther program, the daughter of one of the party's Oakland members, would become a member of my family.) I tried to understand why the Panthers were an armed movement. I thought about how black children in the South had to be escorted to school by armed police. I remembered my father's childhood lynching story; the time we'd been shot at by white racists because I had been photographed kissing a little black boy. I remembered being told that black militancy had evolved out of the civil rights movement when attempts to end discrimination through nonviolent means seemed futile. I remembered John Kennedy's words: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." We were reaping what we had sown.

While my natural inclination was to side with the underdog against the bullies, I couldn't espouse violence as a solution. Meeting state violence with citizen violence felt to me like a dead-end street, literally and figuratively.

My involvement with the Panther party appears in my FBI files as a major focus of the investigation they would soon launch of me, but in truth it was brief and consisted wholly of raising bail money. The party's FBI files, which I obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, would later show that many undercover agents infiltrated the party. I felt that if I was to be harassed or locked up, I wanted it to be for a group in which I was confident, not for the work of undercover agents. That said, the Panthers, like the American Indian Movement with Native people, helped many African-Americans see themselves within a political context rather than as individual victims. (It's not me, it's the system.)

I soon found myself plunged headfirst into what was about to become the focus of my antiwar activism: the GI movement. I had met GI resisters in Paris, but I was unaware of the extent to which antiwar sentiment was growing among active-duty servicemen. I was planning a cross-country road trip when someone suggested I should visit GI coffeehouses along the way and meet antiwar soldiers. Coffeehouses, I was told, were off-base houses run by civilian activists where servicemen and -women could hang out and learn from visiting speakers about their rights as GIs and about the history of Vietnam.

I soon began meeting people who could give me a crash course in the military. Ken Cloke, a lawyer and history professor at Occidental College who specialized in military law, came to Dad's house with information about the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So did Master Sergeant Donald Duncan, a much decorated member of the special forces, the first enlisted man in Vietnam to be nominated for the Legion of Merit. Ken and Donald brought me newspaper articles about GI dissent and told stories about the ways servicemen were being denied their constitutional rights.

The U.S. Uniform Code of Military Justice, for instance, was created during the time of George Washington and today seems medieval: Your commanding officer can bring charges against you, appoint your military counsel, select the court-martial "jury," and even approve or disprove of the verdict and sentence. A favorite saying in the GI movement back in the seventies was an old quote attributed to Clemenceau: "Military justice is to justice as military music is to music." Soldiers questioned why, once they put on a uniform, they were deprived of the rights they had been conscripted to defend—the rights to speak freely, petition, assemble, and publish—and that when they claimed those rights, unjust punishments were meted out with no legal recourse.

Attorney Mark Lane and his partner, Carolyn Mugar, were making a documentary about the GI movement, and from them I came to understand the class significance of the movement. While the civilian antiwar movement was primarily white and middle-class, the GI movement was made up of working-class kids, sons and daughters (ten thousand women were in the service at that time) of farmers and hard hats, kids who couldn't afford college deferments, and a preponderance of rural and urban poor, particularly blacks and Latinos.



I learned that while dissent within the military had started in the mid-sixties mainly as random, individual acts, after the Tet offensive, things began to change. Dissent was no longer a matter of individual acts. GIs began to organize, not just around the growing antiwar sentiment in the military ranks, but in response to the undemocratic nature of the military system itself.

The antiwar GIs represented a minority of our overall Vietnam-era troops. But there was a sizable enough minority of them by 1971 that the army reported an almost 400 percent increase in AWOLs in five years—enough that one military historian, retired Marine Corps colonel Robert D. Heinl Jr., wrote in June in *Armed Forces Journal*:

*By every conceivable indicator, our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non-commissioned officers, drug-ridden, and dispirited where not near-mutinous. . . .*

We mustn't condemn the Vietnam-era soldiers for the things cited by Heinl. Clearly, when you ask soldiers to fight and perhaps die in a war they no longer believe in, you should expect terrible consequences. It would have been hard for the soldiers to believe in a war that by 1970 even moderate American papers and magazines like *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Saturday Evening Post* deemed a folly. When Walter Cronkite began urging a withdrawal, President Johnson said to his press secretary, "If I've lost Walter, I've lost Middle America." The GIs and their families were Middle America.

My first visit to a GI coffeehouse was near Fort Ord, a massive infantry training base in Monterey, California. I hadn't known what to expect or what was expected of me. I wondered if my recent Oscar nomination as Best Actress in *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* would turn my visit into a circus, with GIs wanting my autograph and nothing more. As it turned out, the atmosphere was friendly but somber—no requests for autographs or pictures. They had more important things on their minds. We all sat on the floor, and some of the guys began to tell me about life in the military and their feelings about the war. Those who had seen combat in Vietnam were the quietest. I mostly listened. When I was getting ready to leave, a young man, twenty years old at the most and looking more like fifteen, came up to me wanting to say something but having trouble. I waited, leaning slightly in to him.

"Ahhh . . . I . . . kk . . . abhh." I had to put my ear up against his mouth to hear him. He was shivering and there was sweat on his forehead.

"I . . . I . . . ah . . . I killed . . . ah . . ."

"It's okay, you can tell me," I said, putting my hand on his arm.

"I . . . k-killed a young . . . b . . .," he whispered, and began to cry silently. Up to that moment I had thought only about what we were doing to the Vietnamese. Now, from his suffering, I glimpsed that the war had become an American tragedy as well. *What are we doing to our young men?*

Poor Dad. He watched all of my comings and goings with increasing agitation. I wished I could discuss with him all the things I was learning and the questions I had, but the several times I did he'd explode in generalities about why I shouldn't have anything to do with these people. Maybe I should have asked him to talk to me in the character of Clarence Darrow or Tom Joad.

One day, for instance, we got into a heated argument about Angela Davis, the young black professor at the University of California at Los Angeles, who was a member of the American Communist Party. I said I didn't think she should have been fired from her teaching job at UCLA because she was a Communist, and he vehemently disagreed. Then he pointed his finger at me and said, "If I ever find out you're a Communist, Jane, I'll be the first person to turn you in."

"But Dad, I am *not* a Communist!" I shouted as I ran from him into my room and into my bed, the non-Communist Lone Ranger, pulling the sheets up over my head, desperate to blot out what his words implied. *He would turn me in? His own child?* I knew he had vivid memories of the days of HUAC and how Joseph McCarthy had ruined the lives and careers of people he knew. I knew he was afraid for me. But what about Tom Joad and Clarence Darrow and Abe Lincoln? I couldn't reconcile the father I thought I knew with the more conservative person I now saw him to be.

I can only imagine the confusion and anguish the changes I was going through must have caused my father, and now I am filled with love for his gruff attempts to remain connected to me, however tenuously. In time I could forgive him for not possessing the more radical courage I wanted him to have. Choosing what characters to play can reveal an *aspiration* on the part of an actor, not necessarily the actor's reality.



## AN ASIDE

The activism upon which I embarked in 1970 changed me forever in terms of how I saw the world and my place in it. These changes remain to this day at the core of my being, though the way I express them has grown—fortunately, because in those first years back home there was hardly a mistake I *didn't* make when it came to public utterances.

I had heard and read things that threw into question everything I believed about my country. But what to do? I didn't know, but I felt I couldn't slow down while people's rights were being violated, while people were being killed, while the war continued. Everything (including my career) had to be put on hold till this was stopped.

Instead of reflection, what I did was talk—all the time, everywhere, on and on and on in a frantic voice tinged with the Ivy League. Press conferences became an almost biweekly occurrence. When I look back over that period I realize that I was not ready for so much antagonistic public exposure. I was angry enough going in because of all that I was learning, and when, increasingly, I felt reporters were coming after me and questioning my motives, I became even more defensive. In interviews I was humorless, talking too fast, in a voice that came from some elitist, out-in-space place, anger seething just beneath the surface. This was when I began to use radical jargon that rang shrill and false. *You try to prove what you're not sure of*. I made it easy for the media and others to choose a dubious if not downright hostile lens through which to view me. There I was, up on my soapbox, pronouncing myself a "revolutionary woman," while *Barbarella* had just played in a theater around the corner.

In hindsight I should have listened more, talked less, taken it slower. I wish I had taken Vanessa with me on my cross-country travels. It would have been better for her, for me, for us. Shoulda, woulda, coulda. It makes me wince to think about it now.

Watching some taped interviews years later with my son, Troy (to whom I turn when I need support), I wanted to shout, "Will someone please tell her to shut up?" Troy, always a wise and generous soul, said, "Mom, listen, Taoist sages, when they were learning something new, would isolate themselves for a long time, until they had attained enlightenment and could teach. But you"—he shook his head and laughed—



The march with Native Americans at Fort Lawton near Tacoma, Washington. Janet McCloud is next to me. I was about to be arrested for the first time. (Richard Heyzel/Seattle Times)



Me in the midst of a welfare-rights march in Las Vegas in 1970. (Bill Ray/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images)

"you were out there in public before you had really made those issues your own. Your voice wasn't even your own. You weren't a complete person yet. You weren't *you*."

The following is an explanation, and an explanation isn't an excuse. I have spent a lot of time trying to understand why I did what I did the way I did.

Partly it's the way I am. My instincts are good, but I am not by nature someone who goes slow. I get the picture quickly, and if something comes into my life and touches me and makes sense to me, I plunge in *jusqu'au bout*, right to the end. My life has been a series of gigantic leaps of faith, based almost always on intuition and emotion, not on calculation or ego—or ideology. As British playwright David Hare has said of himself, "I'm where I want to be before I can be bothered to go through the dreary business of getting there."

Then, too, it was the nature of the times. I returned to an America at war with itself in a manner and on a level I had not suspected. There was a visceral sense that everything was ready to blow up, that there could actually be a revolution. Having been in Paris the year before, I knew that it was not inconceivable that students, blacks, workers, and others who felt disenfranchised could bring down their government. What that would mean I hadn't a clue. That such a thing would (as ultimately it had in France) cause a backlash that might very well end in an even more oppressive state didn't occur to me. Certainly no one I knew was articulating any clear, more democratic alternative to what we had in the United States.

I wanted to be taken seriously, and I mistakenly thought that the more militant I appeared, the more seriously I'd be taken. I realized only later that my value was in being just who I was—a newcomer on a fast track seeing a lot of things that were rocking the foundations of my belief system; trying to put it all together; and most important, being a movie star whom servicemen and -women were eager to meet and talk to and from whom I was hearing truth I thought other Americans needed to hear.

What I wanted to be was better—and to *make it better*. I didn't think enough about how I was being perceived. I was too immersed in what I was learning, in trying to understand, and in day-to-day dramas. I would have gotten into a lot less trouble if I had been more self-conscious, more aware of my image, more concerned about how what I said or did might

be interpreted or might affect my career. For better or worse, I still don't. It wasn't until *On Golden Pond*, when I got to know Katharine Hepburn, someone quintessentially conscious of her image, that I was forced to think about the extent to which I have *ignored* mine.

I wanted to be a repeater, like one of those tall radio transmitters at the tops of mountains that pick up signals too faint in the valleys and transmit them to a broader audience. In retrospect, and having survived to write about it, I don't regret having plunged in. Had I been more cautious, I might have become just another concerned observer. A character in E. M. Forster's *Howards End* says that the truth can be found only by exploring the extremes, and "though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset is to ensure sterility."

A persistent assumption about me is that I am a puppet, ready for a new man to pull my strings. There was some truth to this. Until age sixty I never had enough self-confidence to feel validated unless I was with a man, and the men I was with embodied something I felt would make me better than I thought I was. While each relationship did bring me new depth, I invariably ended up feeling: "Something's missing. This doesn't feel right anymore." I would then spend time on my own (though never more than a few years) and begin to identify what it was that was missing—and invariably an extraordinary man would come into my life who seemed to be the One who could help me get there. A puppet has no life without its puppeteer. A Svengali takes his Trilby and molds her into something *he* wants or needs, regardless of *her* potential. In my case, when I got into a committed relationship, I was always partway to where I was headed and my partner would help guide me further along on the journey. For me, this realization has been very important. It has shown me that I have always been, at the very least, the *co-captain* of my ship.

This aside is an attempt to address some of the controversial things said about me *personally*. I'll have more to say later on the subject of the *political* controversy that has surrounded me. If you haven't already, fasten your seat belts. It's going to be a bumpy ride.

## CHAPTER FOUR

SNAPSHOTS  
FROM THE ROAD

hundred years ago." Instead I would rent a car and, like a pioneer in reverse, drive east across America.

I set out with Elisabeth Vailland, a friend from France, in a rented station wagon filled to the brim with sleeping bags, cameras, books, my guitar (David Crosby had been giving me lessons), and a cooler for my odd assortment of foods. I was in the anorexic phase of my food addiction, allowing myself only soft-boiled eggs, raw corn on the cob, and spinach. I was anxious that for two months I would not be taking my daily ballet classes—the longest danceless stretch since I was twenty. To compensate, I felt I had to exert rigid control over what I put in my stomach so as not to put on weight.

Almost from the get-go we were swept up in the tumultuous events of 1970—the invasion of Cambodia, the killing of students at Kent State University in Ohio and Jackson State University in Mississippi, and a series of campus uprisings. Certain events from our trip stand out clearly for me, and like snapshots from the road, I will show them to you. But a lot was a blur of drama, danger, and stress. Fortunately both Elisabeth and I kept journals. Less fortunately there are tens of thousands of pages of FBI files on me, which were apparently begun within weeks of my starting the trip (I later obtained these files via the Freedom of Information Act, which was passed post-Watergate).

Elisabeth was handsome in a Georgia O'Keeffe way. In the press she would be described variously as my hairdresser, my public relations manager, and a Russian dancer. Not unexpectedly, there were hints that we were lovers. We weren't.

Elisabeth and her by then deceased husband, French novelist Roger Vailland, had shared Vadim's penchant for whiskey and *ménages à trois*, and Vadim hoped that my respect for their intelligence would validate his own sexual proclivities. In *Bardot*, *Deneuve*, *Fonda*, Vadim wrote about Roger Vailland: "He rejected, with equal rigor, Judeo-Christian puritanism and communist hypocrisy when it came to sex and man's right to pleasure"—*man's* being the operative word. The moral premise that Roger Vailland and Roger Vadim shared was that there could be no true love unless it was free from sexual jealousy and emotional possessiveness. Elisabeth not only was in agreement, but often introduced Roger to women she thought would please him. I had once asked Roger if he

*There's something happening here  
What it is ain't exactly clear  
There's a man with a gun over there  
Telling me I got to beware*

*I think it's time we stop, children, what's that sound  
Everybody look what's going down*

—STEPHEN STILLS,

"For What It's Worth," 1966

**I**N APRIL 1970, I went out to explore America. So much was new. This would mark the start of my needing to experience things firsthand. I can read and study, but to really "get it" I need to sit in people's homes, see their faces, hear their stories directly, find out what their lives are like. I wanted to put real faces to the troubling facts that I'd been hearing during my three first months back in the States—Native American faces, African-American faces, faces of men in uniform, Middle-American faces. Having lived exclusively on the coasts, what lay between was missing for me—a sandwich with no filling. Living in France had made me feel very American. Now I wanted to know what that meant—not just at the fancy edges but at the center, just as I was seeking my *own* center.

Film director Alan Pakula once said about me, "There seems in her some vast emotional need to find the center of life. Jane is the kind of lady who might have gone across the prairie in a covered wagon one



would be jealous if Elisabeth slept with another man. "That is absolutely forbidden!" he replied.

"Why?" I asked, stunned.

"Because she would stop loving me."

"That's right," added Elisabeth. "I wouldn't respect him anymore if he let me come in the arms of another man."

"That sounds more like hypocrisy than freedom to me," I said.

"But freedom is not always a mathematical equation," she answered in that way European intellectuals have, which always made me feel there was something I wasn't getting. Now I hoped that during our trip I would find out how Elisabeth really felt about her late husband's libertine ways, and I was prepared to be honest about my own experiences. She was the only person I felt I could discuss the subject with. In fact, I never did get clarity from Elisabeth on this subject, although I decided to broach it as we were driving through Yosemite National Park.

"Did you really not mind that Roger had other women?" I asked her. "Did you really enjoy bringing him other women?" Essentially she stuck to what she'd told me before, claiming that sexually and intellectually it pleased her to please him in that way: "I knew he loved me and I knew that these other women didn't mean the same to him as I did."

"I guess I wasn't confident enough not to feel diminished by Vadim's philanderings. I never dared to tell him I wanted him to be monogamous, because I was afraid of being thought bourgeois. I thought that maybe if I were a participant, it wouldn't go on behind my back."

"Did you enjoy being with women?" she asks.

"I don't know. I thought I did at the time because I'm so good at becoming whatever my man wants me to be. I can convince myself of practically anything in the name of pleasing. But now that we're not together anymore, I have been trying to probe what was really going on in my body. In some ways I think I did enjoy it. I liked having an up-close view of the varied ways women express passion. But to go through with it, I'd always have to drink enough to be in an altered state. I always felt scared and competitive—not the best frame of mind to be in when you're having sex. And I always felt angry afterward, never at the women . . . at Vadim. I usually became chums with the women. It was the only way I could feel human under the circumstances, which made me feel used, not good enough, trampled over for his pleasure.



*Vanessa, the plucky sprite, in front of Dad's house just as I was leaving for my first cross-country trip with Elisabeth.*



1971.

*On a quest for meaning.*

*(Billy Ray/Time & Life*

*Pictures/Getty Images)*

"What about you?" I asked Elisabeth. "Did you enjoy it?"

Elisabeth appeared to answer my question without really answering it. (At the end of that two-month trip, I still didn't know where she stood on the subject of enjoyment.) I remember wishing I could be more . . . European, more opaque, like her. I suppose that's why Vadim used to say I lacked mystery.

The fact that I participated in threesomes with Vadim was one symptom of my disembodiment, my loss of voice. It's not as if he forced me to do it. Had I refused, he would have accepted that. I later discovered that his future wives didn't do it. I have written about it because I know that it is not uncommon for girls to accept another woman into their beds to keep a man.

Back to the trip. I loved not having a set itinerary. We would stop whenever we chose and always shared the cheapest motels we could find (\$8 a night on average for a shared room), since I had borrowed money from my business manager to pay for the trip. My inheritance was long gone thanks to Vadim's gambling, and my film salary had been spent on the French farmhouse, which was now for sale.

No one recognized me. I didn't look the way I was supposed to anymore. Three months earlier I still wore the ultrashort miniskirts, revealing blouses, and makeup that had been my costume during my years with Vadim—all designed to attract men's attention. It hadn't taken long for me to see that my appearance made it easier for people to objectify me and created a schism with other women. So I decided I wouldn't dress for men anymore. I would dress so that women weren't uncomfortable around me. My wardrobe was pared down to a few pairs of jeans, some drip-dry shirts, army boots, and a heavy navy pea jacket. I had stopped wearing makeup. I was often surprised by the *anger* this elicited from people—men, mostly—who I think saw it as a betrayal. Soon articles about "just plain Jane" began appearing, with William Buckley writing, "She must never look into the mirror anymore." That's right—I'd looked into the mirror altogether too much during my life.

One day I called a friend in New York, who told me that five thousand women in the city were demonstrating for the legalization of abortion. I wrote in my journal,

*Don't understand the women's liberation movement. There are more important things to have a movement for; it seems to me. To focus on women's issues is diversionary when so much wrong is being done in the world. Each woman should take it upon herself to be liberated and show a man what that means.*

*Did I write that? Whew!* I have included it here because I think it's important to see how far a person can evolve. I've made it abundantly clear that I had not taken it upon myself to "be liberated" and show Vadim "what that meant." I didn't know yet that when part of the population is viewed as "less than"—culturally, economically, historically, politically, psychologically—it cannot be changed individually by individual. It takes the accumulated efforts of many, working in concert, for systemic change.

Long after I started identifying myself as a feminist, I still would not be brave enough to look within myself and identify the subtle ways in which I had internalized sexism—my willingness to forgo emotional intimacy with a man and betray my own body and soul if being honest and speaking my voice meant losing him. Put another way, I was the only person I could treat badly and consider that morally defensible.

We visited the Paiute Indian reservation, about forty-five minutes outside Reno, Nevada, to join a small protest against the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. With permission of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Reclamation was diverting water from the Truckee River and Pyramid Lake, on the reservation, to irrigate farmlands owned by white farmers. On the western rim of the lake were about twenty Indians. Some had brought little vials of water to symbolically pour into the lake.

My appearance at this mild protest was the first item to appear in my FBI files. Their informant reported it this way:

*The group with Fonda totaled about 200 people of which 40 were in Fonda's personal entourage. Her arrival on 7/1/77.*

*of water, brought from California, into Pyramid Lake. It was very peaceful, and no incidents occurred.*

... Lest we confuse intelligence with "intelligence."

While we sat waiting to order in the only restaurant on the reservation, several Indian men came in and invited us to sit at their table. One of them, a beefy guy with dark glasses, kept saying we should get some bombs and blow up the dam the white farmers had built—it was damaging the lake. My antenna went up immediately: *an agent provocateur*. The Panthers had warned me about this. We left immediately.

At the Shoshone reservation in Fort Hall, Idaho, we met up with La Nada, the Native woman I'd met at Alcatraz, and were taken to meet her family—my first time in a Native American home. Her father told us of his persistent suits against the government on behalf of the Shoshone Nation—to stop the stealing of their lands and water. He pulled out several worn cardboard shoeboxes and, with great reverence, showed us documents and letters that proved the tribal claims. He handled the papers as if they were sacred, never raising his voice or appearing angry as he told story after story of defeat and betrayal. Like all Native Americans, the family descended from a people for whom oral history had once sufficed. Experience had taught them that the white man wants proof in writing. So they'd saved the papers that carry their proof. Still no one had paid attention.

As we left Idaho I noted in my journal that indigenous people in the United States seemed to have all the characteristics of a colonized people: no power, no independence, no control over their own natural resources, and a carefully inflicted and fostered tendency to feel that it must be their own fault.

Years later I learned from my FBI files that a white woman who had met us on the Shoshone reservation was an FBI informant. She reported to the agency that Elisabeth and I had come there to "organize and indoctrinate" the local Indians. Wonder if the agency paid her? Wonder if American taxpayers would think it was money well spent, an informant watching us sit at the feet of an elderly gentleman holding

shoe boxes? I remembered her because she had been disappointed that I didn't look like a movie star. She even admitted that she wanted to shout out to everyone that I was Jane Fonda and was angry that I didn't fulfill her fantasies.

I went back to California briefly and walked down the red carpet on Vadim's arm at the Academy Awards. I had barely thought about my nomination for Best Actress (for my role in *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*). Many friends had told me they thought I would win, but my instincts said that would not be the case, and I was right. The remarkable Maggie Smith won for her performance in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. I had attended the Oscars many times during the ten years of my career and had often been a presenter, but that night felt different—not just because I was a nominee, but because my life outside of movies was starting to interest me more than being an actor.

My first public act against the war was at a two-day fast in United Nations Square in the center of downtown Denver—one of many events planned by MOBE (Mobilization to End the War). Over one thousand people were there—all ages, including Vietnam veterans and Native Americans. It seemed to boost people's spirits to have a celebrity among them, and though it was cold and rainy, people stayed huddled together, joined in their commitment. On the final day of the fast, a group of hard hats working on a construction site opposite the square flashed us peace signs as they left work. Hard hats had been stereotyped as pro-war conservatives, just as antiwar activists had been branded as unpatriotic. I was glad to see the stereotypes were unfounded.

At the Home Front, a GI coffeehouse near Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, there were about thirty GIs and staff waiting, including a lawyer who had gotten the base commander to agree to meet with us to discuss a recent situation: A hundred soldiers had lined up in front of the medical dispensary flashing peace signs and saying they were sick—sick of the war. As a result, all of them had been put into the stockade, and it was



sure that could result, it was hoped that my meeting the base commander would lead to the release of the soldier-protesters.

Surprisingly, the general took us on a tour of the stockade and let us talk to prisoners. If he hoped by this to show us that the GIs were being well treated, it backfired. We saw prisoners who seemed catatonic. One appeared to be schizophrenic. Some, who identified themselves as Black Panthers, said they had been beaten, and it appeared to be so. Perhaps the general had never been inside the stockade himself; perhaps he misjudged the effect it would have on me. In any case, the visit was abruptly called to an end and we were ushered out before I was able to determine which prisoners were the protesters.

Elisabeth pondered this paradox of our democracy: Men are punished for protesting the war, yet we are allowed to visit the stockade.

I received word that a psychiatrist from a nearby military academy wanted to meet privately with me. I was taken to a motel where the young doctor talked to me about the training new recruits were being made to undergo, training he said was horrifying, turning the young men into "mechanical robots, devoid of humanity, ready to kill anything."

I had brought dozens of books to give to GIs I met along the way. They included copies of *The Village of Ben Suc*, the abridged version of Bertrand Russell's *Against the Crime of Silence: Proceedings of the International War Crimes Tribunal*, Robert Sherrill's *Military Justice Is to Justice as Military Music Is to Music*, and a collection of GI-movement newspapers. Permission for me to reenter the base had been denied following the visit to the stockade, but several soldiers from the base offered to sneak us on. They wanted me to see an on-base coffeehouse that the brass had created, complete with girlie shows, to keep the men from coming to the GI movement coffeehouse.

We were smuggled onto the base in the trunk of a soldier's car and managed to get to the on-base coffeehouse. It was a rather antiseptic room with a few pinup posters and a small stage, where we quickly distributed the books to the few soldiers who were there (no time to try to get to the stockade). I told them about the Home Front and why I had brought the books. But no sooner had I finished than several MPs ar-

rived and escorted us off the base. Later some soldiers told me that the general didn't make more of a stink about it because he didn't want any media attention, since it was active-duty servicemen who had smuggled us in. I realized that the higher-ups feared word getting out as to the breadth and depth of soldiers' antiwar feelings.

Later I learned that it was during my time in Denver that the FBI began its serious investigation of me—not just getting information from informants, but attempting to get me charged with sedition—which punishes anyone who "advises, counsels, urges, or in any manner causes or attempts to cause, insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty by any member of the military or naval forces of the United States." The FBI cannot investigate someone unless a criminal law has been violated, which was why the agency, soon joined by the United States Army, Secret Service, and National Security Agency, decided to cite sedition—and then set out to try to prove it. In this effort, the FBI questioned nine people who had been present at the time I was on base at Fort Carson.

The answers the FBI received were fairly similar to what they heard from other informants over the three years they pursued their investigation. The agent reported being told that I explicitly stated that deserting will not "help the cause for peace"; that nothing I said "could be construed to be undermining the U.S. government." Another informant said that I "did more listening than talking."

I began to be aware that I was followed constantly and took care not to drive over the speed limit. Nonetheless we were stopped numerous times on one pretext or another, and I had to show my driver's license and registration. I saw it as a form of harassment and realized that for the first time I had stepped across the line that allows upper-class white people, especially celebrities, never to have to experience what other people, especially people of color, face all the time—only far worse. There was a tightening in my stomach; I never knew what would happen next. I was aware of the possibility that I might be set up, but I also felt a deepening resolve to not turn back.

*They're not going to scare me. I'm still the Lone Ranger, and my car is my horse.*

One morning I stepped outside our motel room and there, stretching before me to the horizon, was Monument Valley—red, huge, humbling in its vastness. The monoliths towering up from the flat, timeless valley floor seemed divinely placed, like the vaulted domes of great cathedrals that carry our eyes and our hearts heavenward, a reminder of man's insignificance. I was dumbstruck. My heart filled with love for this country, which I was getting to know. Right then I vowed to commit myself to ensuring that America's moral fiber remained as strong as its beauty.

As Elisabeth and I headed into Santa Fe, we heard on the radio the news that the United States had invaded Cambodia. Suddenly we shifted into emergency mode.

The motel we had checked into must have called the newspapers to say I was there, because several reporters showed up to get my reaction to the invasion. I was shaking with fury: Here was Nixon, elected by promising he would end the war, expanding it into another country! The American public did not yet know that the United States had been secretly bombing Cambodia since March 1969. Nor did we know that U.S. bombers, from 1964 through 1969, had secretly obliterated an entire civilization in the Plain of Jars in northeastern Laos. I would meet countless young people in years to come who cited the events of those days in May 1970 as their wake-up call to activism.

Before the United States bombed Cambodia, it was possible to view the war as President Johnson's "mistake" that President Nixon had inherited. After Cambodia we had to face the fact that the war was no president's mistake. Nixon was expanding the war under the pretext of ending it, despite the fact that by then at least half the Senate and most of the American public viewed it as wrong! These were not actions a president made by mistake. It would be decades before I could see this as the curse of patriarchy—the fear of premature evacuation, of being called "soft."

A student leader at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque invited me to speak on campus. He said the school had been apathetic about the war and he hoped my speech would get something going. I had



*Listening to soldiers at a GI coffeeshouse.*



*Meeting with students during the road trip.  
(Bill Ray/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images)*

never made a speech about the war before, and though I was nervous, I agreed. I called Donald Duncan to seek his advice. Donald had actually gone into Cambodia as a Green Beret and knew a great deal about the situation. I took careful notes and wrote out a serious, detailed speech.

The university auditorium was packed to overflowing, although we had not expected many people, given what the student leader had told us about campus apathy. People were hanging off the balcony and spilling into the corridors. I felt quite important and delivered my prepared, rather scholarly speech to an attentive but quiet audience.

When I finished, a drunken poet stumbled onto the stage demanding to know why I hadn't mentioned the four students who had just been killed by National Guardsmen at Kent State University. Oh my God! I hadn't heard the news. No wonder so many people had come to the auditorium! It had nothing to do with me. I was shocked by the news and felt like a fool. We were swept up in a mass of bodies marching toward the university president's home to demand he shut down the university as a way to mourn the Kent State deaths.

The rest of the trip was a blur of speeches, press conferences, and arrests—at Fort Hood, Fort Bragg, Fort Meade—for passing out antiwar leaflets. A few incidents stand out. At the Los Angeles press conference with Donald Duncan announcing plans for a GI movement demonstration on May 16, Armed Forces Day—the GIs were calling theirs *Armed Forces Day*—one reporter shouted, "Miss Fonda, why were you at the University of Albuquerque inciting the students to riot?" I should have said that he was giving me too much credit, and didn't he think the killing of the Kent State students might have caused the rioting? Instead, I got angry and defensive.

Donald wanted to open a GI office in Washington to act as ombudsman for soldiers—a place where GIs could call or write about what was happening to them, where acts of military injustice could be documented, and where doctors and lawyers could verify their claims and get information about it to the House and Senate for investigation. We decided on the spot that Donald would move to D.C. to head up the office and that I would raise money to fund it.

I had seen turmoil in Paris in 1968, but now in the United States it was happening nationwide. In May, 35,000 National Guardsmen were called out in sixteen states. Over a hundred demonstrators were wounded or killed. A third of the nation's colleges closed down. In early May, students were shot and killed by National Guardsmen at Kent State University. On May 14, police shot into a dormitory at Jackson State University, wounding twelve students and killing two. More than five hundred GIs were deserting every day.

I was refused rooms in two Albuquerque motels because my criticism of Nixon's invasion of Cambodia had appeared in the papers.

I met Terry Davis, an attractive brown-haired woman who was on the staff of another GI coffeehouse, the Oleo Strut, in Killeen, Texas, near Fort Hood. It was my first time experiencing a woman's leadership. This was so powerful for me that, when I think back over my 1970 trip, my time with Terry stands out above all else. Terry treated me not like a movie star but as a peer. She was interested in why I had become an activist and how I had gotten involved in the GI movement. She asked my opinion, included me in all decisions, and made sure I was comfortable. I saw this same sensitivity and compassion in the way she dealt with the GIs. With her, there was no hierarchy, only circle—everyone was valued, heard. It was a harbinger of the new world, a world of authenticity. This was the first time I had met an organizer who deeply embodied her politics, working toward true democracy in her own relationships.

It was at the Strut coffeehouse that I heard, for the first time, a speech about the women's movement. Terry had invited a feminist to speak to the GIs. I was impressed. Up until then I had been confused by women who identified themselves to me as feminists. Mostly, these women asked questions like "How did you feel doing *Barbarella*? Did you feel that you were being exploited?" I could tell that I was supposed to feel exploited, but secretly I thought: *No one forced me to make the film. I didn't enjoy it very much for lots of reasons, but I didn't feel exploited.* (Now I think that with a little tweaking, *Barbarella* could have been a feminist movie—and just as sexy.) The speaker that night, however, said that if there were true equality between women and men, it would be good for both sexes: men wouldn't feel that they alone have to carry the burden



that has been placed on them by the patriarchal system. "It's not a matter of women taking a piece of your pie," she said to the gathered, attentive men, "it's about us sharing the pie and making it bigger."

My experience at the GI coffeehouse was what caused me to begin calling myself a feminist publicly—though it would be many more years before I had a true understanding of what the word and the politics really meant. It was much easier for me to organize on behalf of others—Vietnam veterans, Indians, blacks, and GIs—than it was to look at issues of gender. That would be hardest to face, because it meant questioning the foundation on which *my* identity as a woman had been built: Women are meant to please. They can rock all the boats there are *out there*, but they must do what's necessary to keep the man happy at home.

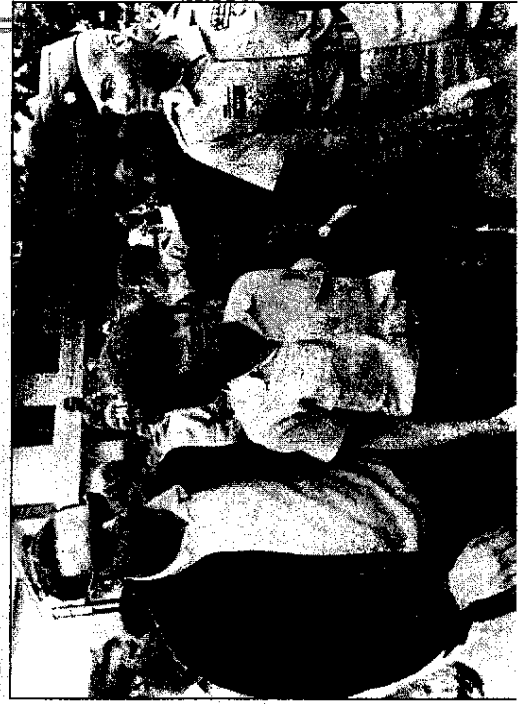
At the Oleo Strut, Elisabeth and I shared a queen-size mattress on the floor with just a quilt to cover us. This was new for me but, as I would learn, a common mode of sleeping among movement activists—one I would soon adopt out of financial necessity. For the first time I also saw wooden cable spools turned on end and serving as tables.

In Washington, D.C., at my first national antiwar rally, there were about one hundred thousand people. I saw white people chanting "Free Bobby Seale!" and many Vietnam veterans in uniform with peace signs on their caps. There were speakers representing all aspects of the antiwar movement. A black man named Al Hubbard spoke eloquently on behalf of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). Shirley MacLaine was there, the only other Hollywood person I saw, and she was clearly far more experienced at public speaking than I was.

Being up there at the microphone before a sea of upturned faces, hearing your voice echoing back at you when you're already on the next sentence—this took getting used to. My assignment was to talk about the GI movement and why the antiwar movement shouldn't view men in uniform as the enemy. I remember pointing to some uniformed men around the periphery of the crowd and saying, "Those men may very well have seen combat in Vietnam. They know better than any of us what this war is like. Don't assume they are against us for opposing the war." There was loud applause, and one of the men threw me a peace sign.



Representing the GI movement at the huge rally in Washington, D.C., May 1970.  
(Keystone/Getty Images)



Arrested at Fort Bragg military base, with Mark Lane and Elisabeth.  
(AP/Wide World)

In Maryland I met with another military psychiatrist who told me about the mental problems he was seeing among many Vietnam veterans. He asked me to listen to a tape he had made of a few of his patients. This was a voice I had heard before, at Fort Ord—the whispering, tremulous voice of trauma.

The doctor stressed to me that the things the soldiers had done had been done in the presence of their officers, sometimes under orders. He himself was frightened of what might happen to him if his name was revealed. I felt heavy with the burden of all I was learning. I was also emotionally and physically exhausted, but it seemed unthinkable to take a break.

In Washington, D.C., Mark Lane and Carolyn Mugar joined us to identify legislators who would be interested in receiving information from the soon-to-open GI office. I had never set foot in the halls of Congress before, much less to lobby. The marble corridors and history-soaked chambers inspired awe and made it even more difficult for me to not feel like a little girl asking my father for something. But my presence caused a real stir. Everyone I met was friendly; some asked for my autograph. Arkansas senator James Fulbright liked the idea of the GI office, and my California senator, Alan Cranston, told us he was receiving eight thousand letters a day from constituents who opposed the war. The experience made me feel more optimistic than I had in a while.

On Memorial Day, right after another large demonstration in Central Park at which I spoke, Elisabeth flew home to Europe. I was home. I felt more American than I ever had. Elisabeth said to me before she left, "America is so alive and open. Your young people are not at all cynical the way they are in Europe." I felt this, too. During that two-month trip, I had experienced the best of America and the worst, and at the trip's end I felt certain that the best would prevail.

I am still baffled by those who feel that criticizing America is unpatriotic, a view increasingly being adopted in the United States since 9/11 as an excuse to render suspect what has always been an American right. An active, brave, outspoken (and *heard*) citizenry is essential to a healthy

## CHAPTER FIVE

# KLUTE

*I was trying to get away from a world that I had known because I don't think that it was very good for me . . . and I found myself looking up its ass . . . and I guess I just realized that I don't really give a damn, that what I would really like is to be faceless and bodiless . . . and be left alone.*

—BREE DANIEL,  
my character in Klute

IN 1970, before I left California to start filming *Klute* in New York City, I needed to line up a place to live when I returned in the fall, a place for Vanessa and me. I'd been living in my father's servants' quarters and I couldn't remain there any longer, especially now that my phone was being bugged. Since raising money was shaping up to be my main movement function, I thought I needed someplace not too expensive but large enough to hold fund-raisers. I found a house on top of a hill overlooking Hollywood, above the smog, and signed a rental agreement. Then I immediately set off, by myself this time, driving across America to New York, to start the film. But driving over the Rocky Mountains into Denver, I had an epiphany: I didn't want to be someone who lives on the top of a mountain and gives out money for people who live below. I wanted to be *with* the people below, to understand who they were, what their lives were like. This feeling welled up with an odd certainty. It was frightening because it meant I would have to change—give up things. Comfort and privilege are relative, of course. "Giving up things" for me might represent a state of comfort for someone else. It's also one thing to have

an epiphany in the solitude of a car and another to go out and live it. *Can I really do this, or is it a momentary whim?* I wondered. *Can I be a movie star and at the same time not stand apart from others?* Then, as I came through the mountain pass, there, over Denver, clear as a bell, was the brightest double rainbow I have ever seen before or since. I took it for a sign. I called the real estate agent in California and canceled the lease on the mountaintop.

Mountaintops were about charity. I was about change.

I arrived in New York in time to spend two weeks researching my role as the call girl Bree Daniel. I had asked the director, Alan Pakula, to get his production assistant to line up some call girls and madams I could spend time with. Aside from that, I hadn't been thinking much about my role, and now that it was looming I was getting nervous. On my drive, I'd begun to wonder if it wasn't politically incorrect to play a call girl. Would a real feminist do that? I asked myself. *A real feminist wouldn't have to ask herself such a question.*

Before backing out, I decided to ask my friend the singer Barbara Dane to read the script and give me her advice. Barbara—a warm, wise, and talented blues singer spending most of her time those days singing for the GI movement—was, after all, an entertainer as well as an activist. I remember what she told me: “Jane, if you think you have room in this script to create a complex, multifaceted character, you should do it. It doesn't matter that she's a call girl, as long as she's real.” Recently Barbara admitted to me that she hadn't been at all sure the script would allow for complexity, but she didn't know Alan Pakula—and she hadn't realized how ready I was for complexity.

I met different call girls or madams each night for about eight nights. Some were classy, some were strung out. The madams were high-class, though probably not on a level with Madame Claude in Paris (I had never met her, only heard about her). I went to a sleazy apartment one afternoon where a girl bought cocaine. I watched the dealer cut it up with a razor on a mirror, watched her snort it through a straw with an eagerness that chilled me. I had never seen anyone do cocaine before, and I disliked her helplessness in the presence of it, though it helped me

understand the character of my girlfriend in the film: a fellow call girl junkie who disappears.

I asked one madam, “There's a scene in the script where I'm supposed to strip while I'm telling a sexy story to an old man who never touches me. Does that really happen?”

“Are you kidding?” She almost fell over laughing and proceeded to tell me about her favorite john. “He would be outside my door peeping through the keyhole while I stood on the other side playing with myself and talking dirty to him. Honey, that's the kind of john you dream for. Nobody touches nobody.”

The women told me they had clients at all hours of the day: in the mornings fresh from home on their way to the office; during lunch breaks (“nooners,” they were called); at cocktail hour, dinner hour, and after hours. “You wouldn't believe the men I service,” one madam told me with a weary chuckle. “Senators, presidents of the biggest companies in the country, diplomats. And the more important they are, the kinkier they are.”

She told me about one executive who always wanted hot wax dripped on his chest while having sex, another who liked a lot of girls together sticking pins in him. There was a story about a priest who insisted the call girl squat over a pan of cat litter; a politician who kept a boa constrictor in his bathroom and could climax only when a terrified girl would scream and come running out. (I spent too much time pondering that one.)

Several times I went to after-hours clubs with call girls, places they'd go to meet up with their pimps and where pimps would bring new girls. Never once during those evenings did a pimp even try to solicit me. I interpreted their ignoring me as a sign that I wasn't right for the character of Bree Daniel. And while I knew there must be “whores with hearts of gold” like those you read about and see in the movies, the ones I met were, understandably, hardened. I knew that if Bree was as cynical as these women, with no inkling of something more underneath, the film wouldn't work. But how could I betray reality? That did it. I asked to meet with Alan Pakula, my director.

“Alan, you've made a terrible mistake,” I told him. “I am all wrong for this character—there's no way I can play her. Even the pimps know I'm not call girl material.” I proceeded to give him a list of the actresses who would be much better suited to the role, starting with my friend Faye Dunaway.



"Alan, Faye would be perfect as Bree! Please let me out of my contract. I just can't do it."

Alan just laughed at me and told me I was nuts. He would go on to tell this story many times over the years when speaking to acting students—I guess to show how blinded actors can be by their insecurities. My friend Sally Field once said to me that the anxiety and emotionalism just before starting a new role is part of the process of becoming raw and porous, so that the new character can inhabit you. Seen this way, the discomfort is a necessary stage in the morphing, when you are not quite *you* anymore but not quite someone new yet.

Vanessa and Dot were staying with me during the filming, and on weekends we made a habit of going to the Central Park Zoo and riding the carousel. Vanessa was a spunky, beautiful child with a husky, striking voice. Though only two, she was also more than able to let me know that she preferred her father, whose exotic eyes she shared. As a father preferrr myself, I couldn't blame her. Besides, I regret to say that I did not feel I had gotten better in the parenting department. It had nothing to do with my work. It was that when I was home, I still wasn't really present. Mother and Dad had been my models, but by now it was up to me, and I hadn't yet learned to leave my "stuff" at the door.

Since for better or worse I was going to go through with it, I began searching for a way to play a call girl differently—tough, angry, but not totally hardened—and this was when I drew on my experiences with some of the call girls I'd gotten to know in Paris with Vadim. There had been a few in whom I had seen glimmers of talent—and hope. That was it! Bree wouldn't be a call girl who wanted to be an actress or a model. She would be an actress, a talented one, whose life experiences, including early sexual abuse and a consequent need always to be in control, had led her to choose hooking as the way to pay for acting classes and rent. From that realization on, I turned a corner. Work on the film seemed to flow. Alan and I were so in sync that it was like having the perfect partner in a grand waltz. I loved him dearly.

I loved my co-star, Donald Sutherland, as well. I found his rangy, hangdog quality and droopy, pale blue eyes especially appealing. He also

As Bree Daniel in Klute.  
(Photofest)



Me in 1970.



had something of the old-world gentleman about him. It was nice that through our mutual work as supporters and fund-raisers for the GL movement we had become friends months before beginning rehearsals.

Bree's apartment was built on a sound stage at a New York film studio, and Alan, at my request, made it possible for me to spend nights there, even going so far as installing a flushing toilet in the bathroom of the set. I would lie at night in Bree's bed in the eerie silence of the sound stage and slowly envision the items she would surround herself with. I had never seen books or pets in any of the apartments of call girls or madams. But I decided that Bree read, not Dostoyevsky, perhaps, but romance novels, how-to books, and the astrological then best-seller, *Sun Signs*. I decided Bree would have a cat, a loner like herself. I remembered an actress from Lee Strasberg's private classes who would be called down to Washington from time to time to pleasure President Kennedy, so I decided Bree had done this and put a signed photo of Kennedy on the fridge. Bree, I realized, wouldn't do hard drugs—pot, maybe—but her control issue limited it to that.

In the script, Bree's psychiatrist was male. But early in rehearsals I realized that Bree would never reveal herself to a man, so I asked Alan to change the character to a woman. I didn't have to ask twice. I also requested that we wait until the end of shooting to film the scenes with the shrink, by which time I would have fully internalized Bree, and then I told Alan I wanted to improvise the scenes. He had given me several books on the psychology of prostitution, and together we talked a lot about the power/control issues that surround gender and the difficulties with trust and intimacy faced by women who have been sexually abused as children (mostly by family members or family friends). I understood how when Bree was with her Johns, *she* was the one in control.

One of the scenes I most enjoyed filming was where I am with a John, having what appears to be a real orgasm and then sneaking a look at my watch over his shoulder. Women in the audience always howled at that scene. There was also a scene in which Bree is asked by Detective Klute to go with him to the morgue to see if her missing friend's picture is in the files of murdered women. At my request Alan arranged for me to visit the actual city morgue, where I was allowed to look through the case files. What I saw remains within me to this day: hundreds and hundreds of color photos of battered and bruised women who had been killed by husbands, lovers, Johns. I had to excuse myself, go to the bathroom, and

throw up. It's not that I hadn't known that violence against women was widespread, but the reality of it had not fully dawned on me until I saw face after face. This experience is what informed the scene toward the end of the film when Bree finds herself confronted by the murderer.

A well-dressed businessman, played terrifyingly by Charles Cioffi, sits across from me and begins to play a tape recording on which I can hear the voice of my missing friend talking to him in the come-on way call girls talk to Johns when they first meet. Then the conversation takes a dark turn. I can hear fear rising in my friend's voice and I realize that the man sitting across from me had taped their conversation just before he murdered her and that he intends to kill me as well.

I had purposefully not done any preparation, wanting instead to let the raw impact of the scene carry me. Throughout the scene I was silent, just listening. But I'm a good listener, and I assumed I would be convincingly scared (although it's the most difficult emotion for me to play). But when the camera started rolling and I heard the fear in her voice, instead of fear for myself I was overwhelmed with an archetypal sadness. It was sadness for my friend, sadness for all the women who are victims of men's rage, sadness at our vulnerability. It felt . . . inevitable. I began to cry—for all the victims. Soon the tears came from my nose as well as my eyes. For an audience, it didn't matter what caused the tears. What mattered was that it was so unexpected, and the unexpected reality brought an electricity to the scene that wouldn't have been there had I simply been "scared." Lee Strasberg once said, "Don't plan. Be."

I knew when we finished the scene that my reaction would not have been the same had it not been for that cross-country trip with Elisabeth and the stirrings of a new feminist consciousness in me, locating an empathy toward women. I understood then that my expanding consciousness as an activist could broaden my understanding of people and why they behave as they do—from (rhetorical, but it's true) a purely Freudian, individualist perspective to one that includes historical, social, economic, and gender-based factors—and that this in turn might make me more compassionate and my acting more intelligent.

Even now, when I watch *Klute* I admire everything about it. In these times of mega-special effects, when we've grown almost numb to what we used to find terrifying, Michael Small's ominous music track is still heart-stopping: Gordon Willis's photography, which caused him to be dubbed "the Prince of Darkness," sucks you in and then slams you with

terror. Alan Pakula was alert to every nuance and knew just how to draw it out of me. As a result, a year later I would win my first Oscar, for my performance as Bree Daniel.

In retrospect I see the parallels between myself and Bree, a woman who felt safer hooking than facing true intimacy.

I hadn't gotten used to being hated yet. Not that everyone had loved me up until then. What was to love—or hate, for that matter? I had occasionally been a bit outrageous in public statements, but generally I had come across as a slightly edgy, nonthreatening, fairly popular celebrity. So when the hate started, it took me by surprise, especially on the film set.

I'd always gone out of my way to be on time, know my lines, never behave like a diva. (I'd pulled that once in *Walk on the Wild Side*, when I was scared to go into a particular scene and kept having my makeup redone—as though different eyebrows and more rouge would somehow make things right. When I finally did show up on the set, I could feel people's anger and I froze. I learned then that if the on-set vibes toward me were negative, it was harder to do good work.) I needed the crew to respect me, to be rooting for me in the tough scenes. So when I came onto the set of *Klute* one morning early on and saw a huge American flag hanging over the doorway to Bree's apartment, I was taken aback. I didn't say anything to anyone, even Alan Pakula, because I didn't want people to know it had gotten to me, this sign that I was thought unpatriotic. Instead I remember sitting in my dressing room getting my makeup done, wanting to cry. But in the hour it took me to get ready, the other, more resilient part of me banished those feelings behind a high wall that (for many years to come) would shield me from feeling the pain of being a lightning rod for certain people's hostilities.

I knew that activism was right for me, that the killing in Vietnam needed to be stopped, and that using my celebrity to help people who were being bullied, deprived of safety and opportunity, was what I needed to do. So when I came out of that dressing room ready for the day's work, my attitude was very "Fuck you, guys, whoever you are." Since "Fuck you" was my character's general attitude about life, it worked for me on that film. Besides, I knew that the people who worked closest to me—Alan, Donald, Gordon Willis, and Michael Chapman, the camera operator—liked me. This was when disparity in people's feelings

about me became a constant in my life. There was visceral hatred and there was something else I wasn't used to: admiration. I wasn't used to people throwing me high fives and peace signs. Fan letters were routine, but not letters filled with thanks for my having taken a stand, and when I went on TV talk shows, the audience response was different—as if people were rooting for me. That felt very good indeed.

Unbeknownst to me, during this time I had become the target of the government counterintelligence program known as COINTELPRO, a secret creation of J. Edgar Hoover, whose purpose was to disrupt and discredit members of the antiwar and militant black movements. This was done through infiltration, sabotage, intimidation, murder (directly assassinating or hiring rival groups to assassinate leaders), by framing activists for crimes the FBI committed, and through fake black propaganda—feeding journalists information through phony letters and inflammatory leaflets that slandered and discredited the targeted person. After extensive investigation of COINTELPRO, Senator Frank Church's Select Committee on Government Intelligence Activities pronounced it "a sophisticated vigilante program aimed squarely at preventing the exercise of First Amendment rights of speech and association." Seems the government felt it necessary to destroy democracy in order to save it. And look where it got us—Watergate and the first presidential resignation in U.S. history.

Richard Wallace Held was head of the Los Angeles section of COINTELPRO, and he specialized in black propaganda. In his 2002 book *The Last Editor* Jim Bellows says that in spring of 1970, while he was editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, Richard Held, with permission from J. Edgar Hoover, had planted a story with the *Los Angeles Times'* gossip columnist Joyce Haber saying that an actress who had recently appeared in a big musical film was now pregnant by a Black Panther. (Jean Seberg, a Panther Party supporter, had just starred in the musical *Paint Your Wagon* and was definitely pregnant, but by her husband, French novelist Romain Gary.)

In August an article appeared in *Newsweek* specifically naming Jean as the actress in question. In her seventh month of pregnancy, Jean attempted suicide and suffered a miscarriage as a consequence. She held an open-casket funeral in Paris so that her friends and family could see that her dead baby girl, whom she'd named Nina, was in fact white. Every year on the anniversary of Nina's death, Jean attempted suicide, until on September 8, 1979, she was found dead in her car in Paris. Also in September, the FBI admitted publicly to what it had done. Jean's hus-



band shot himself several months later. Nice work, guys, and on taxpayers' money, too.

In June, soon after the first Seberg article had appeared, the same Richard Wallace Held received a memo from Hoover authorizing him to send a fictitious letter about me to Army Archerd, a columnist at *Daily Variety*. "It can be expected," emphasized Hoover's instructions to Held, "that Fonda's involvement with the BPP [Black Panther Party] cause could detract from her status with the general public if reported in a Hollywood 'gossip' column. . . . Ensure that mailing cannot be traced to the Bureau [FBI]." Held's subsequent letter read:

Dear Army,

*I saw your article about Jane Fonda in "Daily Variety" last Thursday and happened to be present for Vadim's "Joan of Arc's" performance for the Black Panthers Saturday night. I hadn't been confronted with this Panther phenomena [sic] before but we were searched upon entering Embassy Auditorium, encouraged in revival-like fashion to contribute to defend jailed Panther leaders and buy guns for "the coming revolution," and led by Jane and one of the Panthers chaps in a "we will kill Richard Nixon, and any other M . . . F . . . who stands in our way" refrain. I think Jane has gotten in over her head as the whole atmosphere had the 1930's Munich beer-hall aura.*

Army Archerd knew me, and to his credit, declined to print the letter. There would be more of the same to come.

One article, aiming to portray me as a rich hypocrite (though I can no longer remember where it was printed) said that I had been invited to speak at the University of Mexico but had insisted on having a limousine and on bringing my secretary and hairdresser. (Poor Elisabeth, there she was again.) Another reported that I had crashed a Nixon fund-raiser in New York, climbed onto a table, torn my blouse off, and shouted obscenities.

Starting in May 1970, the FBI, CIA, and counterintelligence branch of the Defense Intelligence Agency began monitoring me and eventually built up a file of some 20,000 pages. I would learn in 1975 that the National Security Agency had made transcripts of my 1970 phone calls and distributed them to Nixon, Kissinger, and other top government officials. One FBI informant reported at the time, "What Brezhnev and Jane Fonda said got about the same treatment." God help us!

It was through information given to my lawyers by columnist Jack Anderson that I learned the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York and the City National Bank of Los Angeles had turned over my bank records to the FBI—without any subpoena. It turns out I was part of Group 1, which meant the documents about me could not automatically be declassified, and many were deemed top-secret. My "case" went by the code name "the Gamma Series," and I am variously referred to as a "subversive" and "anarchist"—although nothing in my files shows any proof as to why I was considered so dangerous.

Apart from government shenanigans, those were difficult times to be a newcomer to the movement scene. There was infighting on the Left, much debate about what the correct position was on this and that. For the radical left wing, the issue wasn't so much ending the Vietnam War as it was smashing U.S. imperialism. Sexism was rampant in the antiwar movement, and many women activists began to develop more feminist priorities. Then there were the yippies—and I wasn't sure *what* they were doing, although I spent a pleasant afternoon at the Central Park Zoo with Abbie Hoffman.

I was confused. Was it just limp, liberal politics to ask: "But what about all the American soldiers and Vietnamese dying . . . for a lie?" I had begun to feel there was no way I could possibly learn enough fast enough to understand why these ruptures were happening and what the radicals were all talking about.

This was a lonely time for me personally. Had I known at the start the hatred, scorn, and lies that would be unleashed at me, I would have gone ahead anyway; I was too immersed in this new world to turn back. What was lacking, I later realized, was a loving environment of fellow activists and friends with whom I could work. I didn't want to be the Lone Ranger anymore.

Then, in an amazing bit of synchronicity, I came upon an article in *Ramparts* written by the man who would within two years provide that loving environment for me: Tom Hayden. The article was titled "All for Vietnam," and it brought things into focus for me. Hayden wrote, "Most peace activists and radicals believe that Vietnam is a flaw—a terrible flaw—in the working of the American Empire. We should follow the war 'not as a 'tragedy,' " he wrote, "but as a struggle in which humanity is making a stand so heroic that it should shatter the hardest cynicism."

That article confirmed and reenergized my commitment to ending

the war, and I sensed that working with antiwar soldiers was the best way I could do that. The movement of active-duty soldiers and returned Vietnam veterans was potent, because these men and women were from America's heartland. They had enlisted as patriots; they returned as patriots. They had *been* there, and this made them more believable to Middle Americans than other groups in the antiwar movement. It was GI resisters, after all, who had brought *me* into the antiwar movement. I became even more committed to making these new heroes, the new warriors, the focus of my efforts.

## CHAPTER SIX

## REDEMPTION

*I hear a lot of people say, "We know Vietnam veterans and they don't feel the way you do." My immediate reaction is, "Wait and see. If they are lucky, they will. If they are lucky, they will open up."*

—ARTHUR EGENDORF,

American Orthopsychiatric Association,  
at a meeting in Washington, D.C., April 1971

*I sincerely believe that we not only have the right to know what is good and what is evil; we have the duty to acquire that knowledge if we hope to assume responsibility for our own lives and those of our children. Only by knowing the truth can we be set free.*

—ALICE MILLER,

*The Truth Will Set You Free*

IT WAS TO BE a war-crimes hearing, what has become known, famously, as the Winter Soldier investigation. The name Winter Soldier invoked Tom Paine's reference to the revolutionary soldiers who, through the terrible winter of 1777–1778, volunteered to remain at Valley Forge. Vietnam veterans would testify about atrocities they had committed or had witnessed while in Vietnam, as a way to let the American public know the kind of war it was. Like all information about the GIs and Vietnam veterans who opposed the war (VVAW), with a Ramboesque sleight of hand it has been disappeared, and history has been conveniently rewritten. I want to help reverse this abracadabra.

The motivation for the Winter Soldier investigation was the My Lai massacre. When the story about My Lai had broken in *The New York Times* in November 1969, it had staggered the public. What had enraged a lot of Vietnam veterans, however, was the way the government was scapegoating Lieutenant William Calley and the men he commanded, calling My Lai an "isolated incident of aberrant behavior." To the membership of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW)—some 25,000 to 30,000 members in 1970–71—the My Lai massacre was remarkable only in the number of victims involved and the fact that it became public.

The vets knew that atrocities were occurring as an inevitable part of our Vietnam policies and that if justice was to be served, the *architects* of those policies—from the president on down—needed to be held accountable, as had been the case at the Nuremberg trials following World War II.

Before the Winter Soldier investigation—the hearings were scheduled for early the following year, 1971—the VVAW, led by Al Hubbard, had organized an eighty-six-mile march from Morristown, New Jersey, to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, where it would end in a Labor Day rally. Donald Sutherland and I spoke at that rally.

I will never forget it. The three-day march culminated as hundreds of the veterans swept up a hill, plastic AK-47 rifles held high, shouting, "Peace now!" Thousands of cheering people gathered to greet them. The most significant speaker that afternoon was a tall, handsome Silver Star winner, one Lieutenant John Kerry from Massachusetts. He had a charisma and an eloquence that immediately marked him as a natural leader. I was never introduced to him that day, although during the 2004 presidential campaign, photos doctored by George W. Bush supporters tried to malign Kerry by making it appear that he had stood next to me.

Getting ready for the Winter Soldier investigation required some hard, fast fund-raising and, not surprisingly, I volunteered to take it on, for which Al Hubbard made me VVAW's honorary national coordinator.

The moment we wrapped *Klute*, I hit the road running. I went to people who had contributed to the GI office. I got my friends David Crosby and Graham Nash to do a benefit concert. But most of the money

came from a grueling six-week speaking tour that took me to fifty-four college campuses across the country.

Whatever controversy I had experienced until then was nothing compared with what ensued on November 2, 1970, after my first speech in Ontario, Canada. Back in the United States, at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, I was stopped by customs officials who, without explanation, demanded that my suitcase and purse be opened and searched. And what do you suppose they found? Little plastic bottles, 105 in all, each marked with "B," "L," or "D": the bottles that contained my array of vitamins.

That did it. They seized the bottles, my address book, and all my books and papers. I was taken to a room, held for three hours, and not allowed to make a phone call to my lawyer. When I tried to stand up, two hulking FBI chaps would shove me back in the chair. I said to them, "If there is a law that allows you to hold me here for no reason, that permits you to keep me from calling my lawyer, please show it to me and I'll be quiet." One of the agents answered, "You shut up! You're in my control. You take my word for it! I'm taking orders from Washington." I didn't yet know about COINTELPRO, but this news showed me that what was going on was serious. *Washington!*

I had just gotten my period, so after several hours I desperately needed to go to the women's room. When the agent blocked my way and was rude, I tried to push him aside. As a result I was arrested for assaulting an officer—as well as for drug smuggling—though I didn't yet know the charges.

Early in the morning I was handcuffed and taken to the Cuyahoga County jail, where they fingerprinted me and took a mug shot. While I was being booked, a man who'd just been arrested asked me, "What are you in for?" I replied that I might be called a political prisoner.

"Well, they oughta throw you in jail," said he. "We don't want no Commies running around loose in this country."

"What are you in for?" I asked.

"Murder," he replied.

I was in a cell for ten hours. The next day I was brought from jail in handcuffs past a phalanx of TV cameras and photographers. As my hands are slender and double-jointed, I easily slipped out of one handcuff and threw a "power to the people" fist in the air, much to the chagrin of the guards. Leaving behind the cameras, I was taken to a courthouse,



where I was surprised and relieved to see Mark Lane. He had heard the news of my arrest (TV was all over it and it had made the front page in many papers) and had flown in to defend me.

I refused to face the presiding judge but turned my back instead, as I felt the "system" had turned its back on me. Mark pleaded with me to turn around, but I wouldn't. I was released on \$5,000 personal bond on the drug charge and then booked on the local charge of assaulting the airport official, released on that charge on a \$500 surety bond, and then booked for a hearing the following week.

Headlines across the country screamed the news that I'd been arrested for drug smuggling and assaulting an officer. Several months later one article tucked away on the back pages of *The New York Times* noted, "It was determined the pills she brought into the country from Canada were really vitamins, just as she said they were," and the charges of assault and drug smuggling were dropped. No headlines for *that*.

The day after my court appearance, I was back on the lecture circuit. Everywhere I went the surveillance had increased. At every airport there were at least two spooks in dark suits and shades (do they always operate in twos?), not even trying to pretend they weren't there to observe and intimidate me. Stress and fatigue began to get to me, but I was determined not to be cowed.

I was moving too fast. I was actively bulimic. I was depressed. I hadn't seen Vanessa and I felt anguish about that. I wasn't reading anymore. I was barely *thinking*. But I kept going. It never occurred to me not to. I was living in crisis mode. U.S. soldiers were willing to testify about the war—at potential personal risk—and I felt a responsibility to do everything I could to make that possible.

A few times the marquees announcing my appearances would say COME HEAR BARBARELLA SPEAK. I began to feel like a sideshow and wondered if what I had to say about the war was getting through all the hoopla.

Mostly I traveled by myself with one small bag. I would arrive at the local airport, where the student in charge of the speakers' bureau would pick me up. En route to the campus, I'd try to get a sense from my host of what I needed to prepare myself for. Increasingly the atmosphere would be described as tense, which usually meant there would be a large turnout; most of the time the audience numbered in the many hundreds, if not thousands. I spoke about the war and the upcoming Winter Soldier hearings and said that I was contributing my speaker's fees to en-



Arrested at the Cleveland airport for "smuggling drugs"—my vitamins.  
(Reuters/Corbis)

able more veterans to attend. When I finished my speech, I would invite any vets in the audience to come up and give me their names and addresses if they were interested in participating, and as soon as I could get to a phone I would follow up with the VVAW's Detroit office.

Right up to the day the hearings began in January 1971, vets were showing up to see if they could testify, or at least attend. Most had never been part of any organized activity against the war; many had never before spoken to anyone about their war experiences.

It was critical for VVAW that all the men who were slated to testify were legitimate veterans with their DD-214 (discharge documents) in hand, and that they could prove they had been where they said they had been. The organizers did a remarkable job with this—which was fortunate, since the Nixon White House subsequently did all it could to prove the men weren't really combat veterans; and when they failed, they did the men the disservice of calling them "alleged vets" anyway, in an effort to discredit them and their testimony.

On January 31, hundreds of people from all over the country crammed into the large conference room in a Howard Johnson motel to witness this unprecedented event. Barbara Dane and Ken Cloke were there, Ken to review veterans' documents and offer legal help as it was needed. Another person who stopped by was Tom Hayden, author of the *Ramparts* article that had so influenced me.

I had never met him before, and he invited me to have coffee with him in the hotel's coffee shop. He was a bona fide movement "heavy" of whom I was in awe, and I was nervous and intimidated. I remember him talking mostly about the Red Family collective in Berkeley, California, of which he was a member. These groupings were springing up all over the country in the seventies. They were a way for longtime activists to overcome the depersonalization of the mass movements by creating close-knit, supportive families, models of a new way of living.

In his eloquent opening remarks at the Winter Soldier investigation, Lieutenant William Crandell, Americal Division, an officer of VVAW, made it clear the investigation was not a mock trial. "There will be no phony indictments," he said. Instead the men would give straightfor-

ward testimony about "acts which are war crimes under international law. Acts which these men have seen and participated in. . . ." Civilian experts testified about different aspects of the war. For the first time, Bert Pfeiffer, a doctor from the University of Montana, discussed the toxic effects of a dioxin-laden 2,4,5-T herbicide known as Agent Orange, which the United States was spraying on the forests of Vietnam to kill trees and deprive the guerrilla soldiers of their cover. A message of support from family members and spouses of American prisoners of war was read.

I want to mention the presence of Staff Sergeant George Smith, the first U.S. POW from Vietnam I had ever met. He had served with Fifth Special Forces and had been a prisoner of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam (Vietcong) from 1963 to 1965. George would later join me and others on a national tour.

The heart of the Winter Soldier investigation was the testimony from the veterans. They represented every branch of the U.S. military, officers as well as enlisted men. Sitting solemnly in front of microphones at a long table covered by white cloth, they made an unusual sight with their medals, uniforms, long hair, and beards. One by one they said who they were, where they had served, and what category of war crime they would testify about.

In voices sometimes choked with emotion, the men told how they and others had randomly killed Vietnamese civilians and tortured Vietnamese prisoners. They told of raping and mutilating women and girls; cutting off ears and heads; rounding up entire villages into concentration camps (called "new life hamlets" in the obscene war-speak that was being used to sugar-coat reality). They told of B-52 carpet bombing; throwing Vietcong suspects from helicopters; using white phosphorus (Willie Peter), which burned endlessly through a person's body. One pilot said:

*Anywhere in North Vietnam basically is a free-fire zone. There were no forbidden targets. If you didn't find any particular targets that you wanted to hit, then normally you'd go ahead and just drop your bombs wherever you wanted to.*

All this, the vets repeated, was done in the presence of officers who said nothing, did nothing, to stop it. Some of the vets talked about getting hooked on drugs to numb themselves to what they did.

One of the many lies promulgated by the U.S. government came out at the hearings when five veterans revealed that the Third Marine Divi-



sion had been in secret combat in Laos in 1969. They said the U.S. military refused to evacuate out any wounded or dead for fear the press would find out about the operation.

I was numb as I listened to speaker after speaker describe these atrocities. I *heard* what was being said, but I couldn't get my heart to grasp it. Partly it had to do with my own emotional state. My nerves were shot. I couldn't sleep. Picketers outside the Howard Johnson hotel were brandishing signs saying I was a Communist. My father wasn't speaking to me and, because of the news reports about my arrest, probably thought I was a drug smuggler. My Hollywood connections feared I'd never work again. I felt my life was spinning out of control.

One of the few times I cried was over the "rabbit story." It was told by Sergeant Joe Bangert, First Marine Air Wing, about his last day at Camp Pendleton and reminded me of what I had heard about traumatic training from military psychologists:

*You have a little lesson and it's called the rabbit lesson, where the staff NCO comes out and he has this rabbit and . . . then in a couple of seconds after just about everyone falls in love with it . . . he cracks it in the neck, skins it, disembowels it . . . and then they throw the guts out into the audience. You can get anything out of that you want, but that's your last lesson you catch in the United States before you leave for Vietnam. . . .*

Supporters of George W. Bush's administration, like those of Nixon at the time, have tried to portray the winter soldiers as frauds. The fact is, those soldiers were telling the truth. There is *no accurate refutation of any of the testimony given during the Winter Soldier investigation*. Only one man (who did not testify) had falsified his military rank, and that was Al Hubbard himself. It turned out that Al had been not an air force captain, but an air force staff sergeant E-5. Al admitted on the *Today* show in 1971 that he had lied "because I recognize in this country that it's very important that one has an image."

A month or so later, while sitting in the projection room of Francis Ford Coppola's Zoetrope offices in San Francisco, watching a rough cut of the documentary *Winter Soldier* with other of the film's funders, I finally broke down. And once the tears came, they were unstoppable. Until then I had thought that what was important about the Winter Soldier investigation was its indictment of the U.S. government for sending

men to fight a war whose very nature made atrocities inevitable. But something far more profound than the question of blame had transpired over those three days in Detroit.

A spiritual shift had occurred that signaled hope. These men, as they gave witness, were shedding the old, soul-destroying warrior ethic, emerging out of numbness, being reborn. They were pointing the way for all of us: If they, who had done and seen the unimaginable, could transform themselves by their collective truth telling, then couldn't we all? Today we do those who served in Vietnam a grave disservice to feign outrage at what these men said and did and to deny that any atrocities were committed by Americans or to *blame them*. They were not alone in revealing the horrors of the Vietnam War. In 2004 *The Blade* (Toledo) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for its October 2003 series, *Buried Secrets, Brutal Truths*, which documented how the 101st Airborne Division's Tiger Force platoon went on a seven-month rampage through forty villages in the central highlands of Vietnam in 1967, killing scores of unarmed men, women, and children. The Pentagon undertook a full-scale investigation of the atrocities committed by Tiger Force and submitted it in 1975. It seems to have been "lost" at both the White House and the Pentagon when Richard Cheney was chief of staff and Donald Rumsfeld was secretary of defense.

What many people failed to do then (and continue to fail to do today) is admit what happened, understand the context, and make sure those circumstances never happen again. The winter soldiers showed us that redemption is possible when truth is spoken.

Nothing can change until we acknowledge what is—as I have learned over time.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

INSURRECTION  
AND SEXUALITY

*Own my leadership?* What leadership? I didn't see myself as a leader. I saw myself as a staunch lieutenant—give me my orders and I won't stop until I've carried them out. But his comment had an impact on me. It suggested that my career had broader implications beyond my own success or failure—that being successful at my work would give me more heft and a wider reach for what needed to be communicated. Maybe I could even figure out a way to make movies that themselves had something of value to say. But to be honest, the notion of having to step up to the plate and address my film career seriously felt overwhelming.

I moved back to Los Angeles and found a place of my own. It was a rental in downtown Los Angeles just off the Hollywood Freeway, at the end of a cul-de-sac, crouched in a perpetual haze of smog. Vanessa and Dot were with me, and it was home base for most of the next eight months while Donald Sutherland and I worked on a film comedy called *Steelyard Blues*.

I had sold all my belongings, collected lovingly over the years in France when such things could be had for a price: the blond Biedermeier pieces, the pair of red lacquered Ruhlmann chairs from the 1930s, the Roy Lichtenstein rug—all gone. I wish I had them today, but I needed the cash. Now, instead of noteworthy furniture-cum-works of art, I did what others in the movement did back then: Wooden cable spools were my tables, mattresses on the floor served as beds and couches. They didn't look bad covered with the bright cotton fabrics I'd brought back from India. Some lamps and beanbag chairs from the nearest Salvation Army center rounded out the meager furnishings, and to tell you the truth, I was perfectly happy. The differences between the way I lived and the way those I worked with lived were beginning to disappear, and I was able to answer the question that had scared me during my Rocky Mountain epiphany: Yes! I can give "things" up; my desire to come down off the mountain was not a momentary whim.

My accountant, fearing the profits from the sale of the French farm and my furniture would disappear overnight into the coffers of some new movement organization or other, had encouraged me to hire someone to live with me and keep fiduciary control over my expenses. Ellen Lustbader was her name, and she was a five-foot-eleven blonde with a ready sense of humor, game for just about anything I threw at her. We called her Ruby Ellen, and I was grateful for her support and good company during those difficult in-between-husbands years.

*Nixon doesn't want to be the first American president to lose a war but he may be the first American president to lose an army.*

—DICK GREGORY

*... Being the object of male desire and the male gaze, that acknowledgment of personhood that, in the conventional world, only a man can bestow.*

—CAROLYN HEILBRUN

BY THE BEGINNING OF 1971—a year after the release of *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* and while the Winter Soldier investigation was in progress—I began thinking seriously about quitting the film business. I didn't want to be a celebrity anymore. I didn't want to be different. I wanted to join a film collective somewhere and just blend in.

Part of it was a desire to shed my celebrity, and part of it was that I needed a home, structure, a "family." While I have no problem now, at age sixty-seven, being by myself while I go through transitions, at age thirty-three I was adrift on every level. I needed anchoring.

I had become friends with Ken Cocherel, a charismatic black attorney in Detroit who was, among other things, lawyer for the League of Black Workers. I confided to him my desire to give up my career and he surprised me by saying, "Jane, there will always be people who can be in collectives. There is no one in the movement, no real activist, who is a

Every morning I drove Vanessa to a preschool cooperative, and once a week I took my turn there as a parent-helper. I was still suffering with bulimia and probably didn't do a very good job. I was always tired.

On Vanessa's third birthday I baked a cake using a recipe from Adelle Davis's *Let's Cook It Right*. As I was carrying it into the living room, where a group of her schoolmates were eagerly gathered, the cake slid off the platter and broke into little pieces on the hardwood floor like a brick, which made the kids howl with laughter! Vanessa had a look that seemed to say "What's a kid to do with a mom like this?"

I felt I just couldn't get anything right when it came to mothering. For a while Vanessa took dance classes at UCLA, where children pirouetted around on tiptoes waving long, colorful streamers above their heads. Often she'd want to do encores in our living room for me, but she always refused to dance unless I promised to keep my eyes closed. She was a funny one—imaginative, feisty, unusually bright, with a tawny, tomboyish beauty. I loved her and hated the distance that remained between us. I didn't share the physical closeness she had with her father (to whom I was still legally married). Whenever a photo was taken of us together, there would be an I-don't-want-to-be-here expression on her beautiful little face—like me with my own mother. I needed to forgive my mother and to love myself more before I would learn how to be a better mother to Vanessa.

While I was living in the charmless house on the cul-de-sac, Donald and I launched a new organization in Hollywood aimed at harnessing the industry's powerful antiwar voice. We named it the Entertainment Industry for Peace and Justice (EIPJ) and invited everyone we knew in Hollywood to its launch in the grand ballroom of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Six hundred people from all walks of the industry turned out, including Barbra Streisand, Burt Lancaster, Tuesday Weld, Jennifer Jones, Richard Widmark, Don Johnson, Kent McCord—the sheer volume of star power was astonishing. The problem was that neither Donald nor I had ever started an organization before and weren't equipped to give leadership to this uniquely rambunctious group.

EIPJ should have made a big difference, but instead of focusing on how we could use the considerable talent and influence of this unique group of people to mobilize for ending the war, we got caught up in more divisive and diversionary issues—like whether or not film studios should be nationalized. Our meetings began to get longer and longer. It was easy to understand why most of the Hollywood folks drifted away after a time.

Today I can look back on the EIPJ experience with some forgiveness of my leadership failings. Leadership is complicated, especially for women. Men grow up in a culture that assumes their leadership. Even men who may not be true leaders are taught, explicitly or implicitly, what leadership looks like; it's passed down to men through generations.

Women were traditionally denied this generational fix on leadership, and this became evident in the early seventies. So we stumbled and groped. Now, as the women's movement has matured, we've made the delicious discovery that most women's style of leadership is very different from men's—more circular and inclusive than hierarchical and elite. For women it's not about having leadership over. It's about facilitating a process that evokes everyone's inherent leadership abilities. This isn't because women are morally better than men; we just don't have our masculinity to prove. Of course, there are some women (I won't name names) who are ventriloquists for the patriarchy, who try to get seats at the table by doing things the way men do them. But over the last decades we've discovered that despite our vaginas and breasts, if we do things the same old way, we're going to get the same old I-win-you-lose results, rather than win-win.

I was the leader within the Entertainment Industry for Peace and Justice organization, but because I lacked confidence, I didn't "own" my leadership and was always looking over my shoulder for someone who could take over and *really* lead.

I continue to be amazed at the number of women I consider strong leaders, who still worry about "taking up too much space in meetings," worry about being "too assertive" in expressing their ideas and needs, become little girls again in the presence of male "authority" figures. Once we women are able to own our leadership, to embody our power (and more and more women are—including myself), the world will be a better place indeed.

In June 1971, *The New York Times* began publishing articles based on secret government documents—the Pentagon Papers. It electrified the antiwar movement. Daniel Ellsberg, a Pentagon insider and ex-marine who had been one of the authors of the documents, together with a RAND Corporation researcher named Anthony Russo, had spent months copying and smuggling the documents out of RAND. As Ellsberg wrote in his 2002 book, *Secrets*, "What I had in my safe at RAND was seven thou-

sand pages of documentary evidence of lying, by four presidents and their administrations over twenty-three years, to conceal plans and actions of mass murder. I decided I would stop concealing that myself. I would get it out somehow." Even Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, when he read the study he had commissioned, said to a friend, "You know they could hang people for what's in here."

Of course the Nixon Justice Department freaked and issued an injunction against *The New York Times*, ordering the paper to cease publication of the documents. But the Supreme Court ruled that the paper could continue publishing the articles. Nixon then got a federal grand jury in Los Angeles to indict Ellsberg and Russo for violating the Espionage Act and stealing government documents. All charges were eventually dropped against Ellsberg, for reasons of government misconduct against him.

No one knew it at the time, but the leaking of the Pentagon Papers was what led Nixon to create his team of "plumbers," so named because their job was to stop "leaks." Their first assignment was to burglarize Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office in the hope of finding something they could blackmail him with. The administration feared that Ellsberg knew that Nixon had begun discussing the use of nuclear weapons in North Vietnam in 1969, and they wanted to silence him. The plumbers' Watergate assignment—well, that's history.

One day in the fall of 1970 while I was filming *Klute* and helping to plan the Winter Soldier investigation, a man named Howard Levy came to see me. He was a celebrity in the GI movement, a physician who had done prison time for refusing to train special forces going to Vietnam. He pitched an idea to Donald Sutherland and me: Why not put together an antiwar alternative to Bob Hope's traditional pro-war entertainment? He even had a name for it: FTA.

Those letters formed a popular acronym among GIs (Fuck the Army), but for us (publicly, at least) it meant Free the Army. Howard wanted us to try to bring the show to U.S. military bases both stateside and in the Pacific. I found the concept irresistible. Here was a way to support the GI movement—which I increasingly felt was the cutting edge of the peace movement—and to do so using my professional skills. Acting and activism—together at last!

At the time, Donald and I were planning *Steelyard Blues*, to be di-

rected by Alan Myerson, who also agreed to direct the FTA show. Howard Hesseman, Garry Goodrow, and Peter Boyle (all of whom were going to co-star in *Steelyard Blues*) joined the FTA cast as well. FTA was political vaudeville with an antiwar, pro-soldier theme. It was written mainly by Jules Feiffer, Carl Gottlieb, Herb Gardner, Fred Gardner (no relation), and Barbara Garson. The show was intended not only to support the soldiers' antiwar sentiments but to call attention to the way soldiers were dehumanized in the military. Some may say that dehumanization is the only way the military can work, but if stripping young people of their rights and their feelings of empathy, and filling them with racist, sexist attitudes is the only way we can succeed in making them into good soldiers, then we have a problem.

Some high-ranking military officers share this view as well. I heard U.S. Army (ret.) general Claudia Kennedy say, for instance, that the military should be prepared to deal with "soft" issues like ethics and integrity, not just technology and weapons systems.

As Ken Cloke once said to me, "Defensive wars against oppressive regimes do not require dehumanization." The problem was that in Vietnam dehumanization was necessary, because rather than being a defensive war, it was a war of outside aggression (ours) against the popular will of the Vietnamese.

Dick Gregory and Barbara Dane joined Peter Boyle, Donald, and me for our first FTA performance on March 14, 1971, at the Haymarket Square coffeehouse near Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

JANE FONDA'S ANTIWAR SHOW SCORES HIT NEAR ARMY BASE, read next day's headlines in the *Los Angeles Times*. The article went on to say, "The soldiers roared time and again their desire for an end to the war."

We performed three times to packed houses in Fayetteville, even though the police used long-range infrared cameras to take pictures of all the soldiers as they entered and even announced there had been a bomb scare, which we ignored, to the delight of the soldiers.

We had assumed we'd be performing for the soldiers and sailors, but suddenly that spring, the air force erupted with antiwar sentiment—not surprising when you realize that Vietnamization was turning it into an air war.

The air force's desertion rate doubled; Travis Air Force Base in California, the primary embarkation point for flights to Vietnam, was in a



state of siege for four days in May. The bachelor officers' quarters was burned, one man was killed, dozens injured, and 135 were arrested.

In June, Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas saw a revolt. In August, Chanute Air Force Base in Illinois saw a violent uprising, and that spring airmen and airwomen, with civilian support, turned an old theater into the first air force coffeehouse, the Covered Wagon. When we performed there, a local reporter asked me if we were urging servicemen to revolt. "No," I said, "they're ahead of us on that."

From the beginning, the intention had been to try to bring the FTA show to South Vietnam as an alternative to Bob Hope's pro-war, testosterone-driven tour. I wrote to President Nixon asking for permission to go to South Vietnam for Christmas. I wasn't holding my breath for a Dear-Jane-Sure-come-on-over-we'd-love-the-troops-to-see-you-Love-Dick letter, but I wanted to be able to say that I'd at least tried. The backup plan was to perform for GIs stationed in the Pacific en route to or from Vietnam. We also decided to make a documentary film of the tour, and a company called American International agreed to distribute it. By summer we had a new, more diverse cast. Besides Donald and me, there was singer Holly Near, poet Pamela Donegan, actor Michael Alaimo, singer Len Chandler, singer Rita Martinson, and comedian Paul Mooney. Francine Parker, a Hollywood producer, took over the directorial reins.

When I watch the film we made, I am impressed by the extent to which we achieved a real ensemble. Everyone had his or her own solo bit; no one stood out more than the others. Donald, of course, was a mainstay. He played President Nixon to my Pat:

[Pat Nixon runs in breathlessly] "Mr. President, Mr. President . . ."

"What is it, Pat?" asks Richard Nixon.

"Mr. President, there is a massive demonstration going on outside."

"There's a massive demonstration every day, Pat."

"But this one is completely out of control!"

"What are they asking for today?"

"Free Angela Davis and all political prisoners, out of Vietnam now, and draft all federal employees."

"All right, we have people to take care of that, Pat. Let them do their job, you do yours and I'll do mine."

[Hysterical] "Richard, I don't think you understand. They're about to storm the White House."

"Oh. Then I'd better call the army."

"You can't, Richard."

"Why not?"

"It is the army!" [or air force or navy or marines]

We spent the fall touring the country performing for some fifteen thousand GIs near major U.S. military bases, and in November, after performing at Philharmonic Hall in New York, off we flew to Hawaii, where GIs were flooding in from Vietnam for R&R.

All told, we did twenty-one performances during the overseas tour, for an estimated sixty-four thousand soldiers, sailors, marines, and men and women in the air force. It was made extremely difficult for the servicemen to attend. They were photographed and risked getting harassed; the military authorities would put out misinformation about the time and place of the show in an effort to prevent the soldiers from getting there in time (we'd always wait for them). Also, those sixty-four thousand spread the word to countless others. Ken Cloke told me that when he'd gone to the Philippines and Japan to visit GI coffeehouses right after FTA had been there, bootlegged audiotapes of the show were "selling like hotcakes" among soldiers and were even circulated in Vietnam. He also told me that attendance at the coffeehouses increased dramatically following our tour.

One very important thing happened while the tour was in Japan. We filmed an interview with several men at Iwakuni Marine Base who told us that despite the agreement between Japan and the United States following World War II that stipulated nuclear weapons were never again to be brought onto the island, they themselves were moving nuclear weapons around the bases, *all in secret, all illegal*. They asked us to demand that a search be conducted to uncover the truth. We got nowhere. On July 14, 1972, the FTA film opened in Washington, D.C., distributed by American International.

Some GIs were upset that I didn't live up to their fantasies. One soldier told Holly Near that they'd torn down my *Barbarella* poster in anger. I wasn't secure enough to let their disappointment roll off my back. So

much of who I'd been had to do with what men wanted me to be; their admiring gaze was the "acknowledgment of my personhood." What would happen now? Would I ever be able to work again? Would anyone ever want to see me onscreen again? Yet another part of me knew I couldn't go back.

In years to come, as I approached fifty, I would again revert to that woman who needed to fulfill her man's fantasies. I was afraid that I'd never have the one, truly intimate relationship that I so wanted, and I thought it was only in that fantasy role that a man could love me.

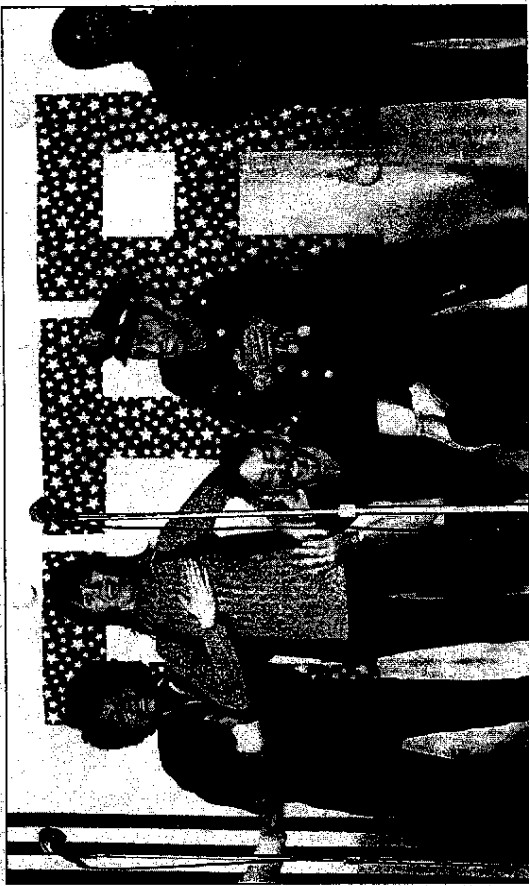
*Why does it have to take so long to heal?*

I wish I could do the tour over again, as the person I am now. I would have gone onstage and said, "Hey, I know it must disappoint you to see me like this, not as sexy Barbarella, but as a regular person in jeans and no makeup. I could do the Barbarella bit, but then I'd be in the Bob Hope show. And hey, I understand about sexy fantasies, but let me tell you something: When it's you having to live other people's fantasies, it can be dehumanizing. 'Sexy' is great as long as it doesn't require you to deny who you are—well, that's what happened to me. I lost who I was. Now I'm trying to get real and I hope you understand—and I love you."

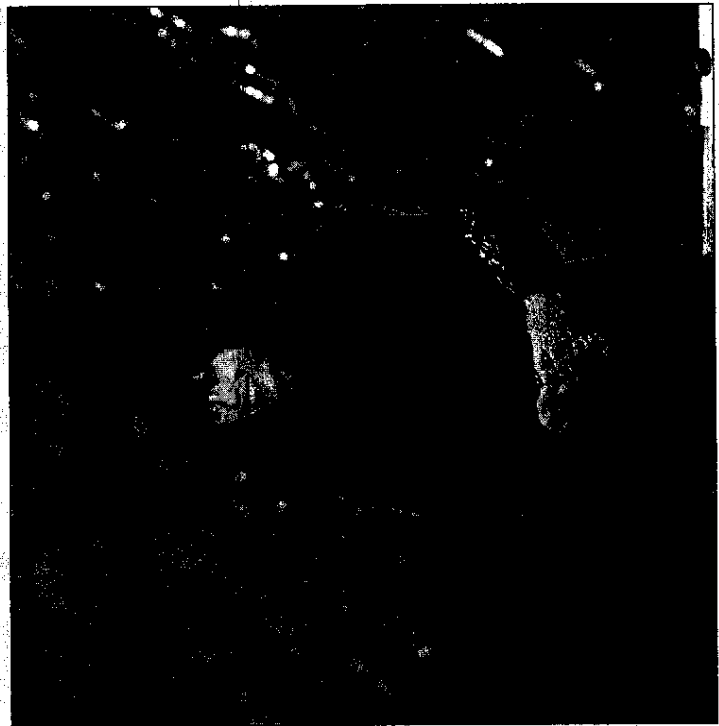
Perhaps I could have found ways to equate how the "Barbarella syndrome" affected me with how the military was dehumanizing them. It could have taken maybe four minutes at most; I could have said it with humor; and I know most of the guys would have gotten it and been there for me.

When I hear people today saying that anti-Vietnam War activists were antisoldier, I wish I could rerelease that film. It wasn't a great piece of art—it didn't need to be. Just the fact that we showed up in support of the soldiers was important. What we did was raw, unprecedented, outrageous, and, in today's environment, totally unthinkable. We succeeded because the soldiers were ready and ripe with passionate antiwar, antimilitary feelings.

As soon as the FTA tour was over, I flew, on Christmas Day 1971, di-



*The FTA show. From left to right: Rita Martinson, me, Donald Sutherland, Michael Alaimo, Len Chandler.*



*Receiving my Academy Award for Klute. (Bettmann/Corbis)*

Yves Montand—a movie I didn't want to make. I was homeless, structureless, loveless, and bulimic. Not a good combination. My gray drizzle of a life felt as though it was dissolving on some crucial level. There was the endlessly escalating war. Vanessa was having terrible, screaming nightmares every night; I was racked with guilt and didn't know what to do. Whenever I had a day off, I would play with her in the swank apartment Vadam was renting on the rue Trocadero or take her to the Jardins des Tuileries, where there was a wondrous variety of children's rides.

The director of *Tout Va Bien* was Jean-Luc Godard, the French avant-garde filmmaker who had become internationally known in the sixties with his movie *Breathless*, starring Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo. Godard had offered me the role the previous summer without showing me a script, and I had accepted unquestioningly. After all, Godard was seen as a political filmmaker, and there weren't too many of those around. But when I received the script, I found it incomprehensible. It read like one long polemic. Godard, I learned, was a Maoist. I believed myself for having accepted the role with so little knowledge of its content, and through my agent I got word to Godard that I was backing out. I didn't want to be used by him to get financing for something with politics that seemed obscure and sectarian.

Probably his financing depended on my being in the film, and he wasn't about to take this lying down. All hell broke loose!

While I was visiting Vanessa in Megève with her father, a man who was close to Jean-Luc Godard arrived at Vadam's doorstep and threatened me with bodily harm if I didn't do the film. What was especially memorable about the encounter was how Vadam reacted. He shouted at this man: "*Sortez! Calviniste, vous êtes un sale Calviniste!*" ("Get out, you dirty Calvinist!") Calvinist? This was a new one on me, and I wasn't entirely certain what it meant to call this man, who was actually a Maoist, a Calvinist, but it sounded terrific and I loved Vadam for his lack of equivocation. Still, I went ahead and made the dreaded *Tout Va Bien*. I wasn't even thrilled that Yves was co-starring in it, because by now it was no secret that he was playing around on Simone (I was perhaps the last to know), and she was very unhappy. I spent time with her and hated to see her so down.

During the filming, I kept my head down, staying under the radar, showing up on time, and keeping to myself on the set to avert outright hostility between Godard and me.

In late February 1972, just as I was returning to California from Paris, I learned I had been nominated for a Best Actress Academy Award for my performance in *Klute*. For several weeks after my return I was a nomad, moving from place to place, sleeping on friends' couches. Desperate for a place where Vanessa could be with me, I borrowed \$40,000 from my father and bought a home on a hillside above Studio City in the San Fernando Valley. Dad must have seen that this would afford me some needed stability, and I insisted on signing a promissory note to pay him back (which I did within the year). Dad had his own nonintimate ways of letting me know he was there for me.

As Oscar time drew near, everyone was telling me I would win, and this time I felt they were right. It was in the air. But what was I going to say when I accepted? Should I make a statement about the war? If I didn't, would it be irresponsible of me? I decided to ask Dad for his advice—Dad, who didn't believe in the whole awards business at all ("How can you pick between Laurence Olivier and Jack Lemmon? It's apples and oranges!"). But he came through. His verbal parsimony paid off: "Tell 'em there's a lot to say, but tonight isn't the time," was his recommendation—and the moment I heard it I knew he was right.

I was sick with the flu on the night of the awards. Donald Sutherland was my escort, and I wore a stark black wool Yves Saint Laurent pants suit I had purchased in Paris in 1968 soon after Vanessa's birth. My hair was still in the *Klute* shag, and I must have weighed all of one hundred pounds.

The Best Actress category is always third to last, followed by Best Actor and Best Picture. When my name was announced as winner, I somehow managed to make the endless march to the stage without falling, and as I arrived in front of the microphone, I was stunned by a feeling of love and support that emanated from the audience. I remember the booming silence as they waited for me to speak. I remember my fear that I would black out. I felt so small all alone on the stage looking out into the cavernous theater, seeing the upturned faces in the first few rows fixed on me, everyone holding their breath, their energy pushing toward me. I heard myself thanking the people who had voted for me and then: "There's a great deal to say, but I'm not going to say it tonight. Thank you"—just as Dad had suggested. There was an audible release of tension from the audience; they were grateful that I hadn't given a diatribe. I walked off with my Oscar as the applause erupted and walked right into



a corner and sobbed, overcome with gratitude. *I am still a part of this industry!* Then, with disbelief, *How can this have happened to me when it hasn't happened to my father?* I skipped all the post-Oscar parties and got home to discover I had a raging fever.

Winning the Academy Award was a huge event for me as an actress; whatever else happened, I would always have that. But nothing really changed in my life—not that I expected it to. Yet there's always a vague hope that such acclaim will make everything else fall into place. It doesn't.

I was betwixt and between. Was I a celebrity? An actor? A mother? An activist? A "leader"? Who was I?

The Entertainment Industry for Peace and Justice, which Donald and I had launched a year earlier, was all but defunct. So much for my leadership. I still felt an urgent need to end the war, but I was unsure how to continue working with Vietnam Veterans Against the War (which was splintering into factions) or the GI movement (since most of the ground troops were home by now).

I managed to take Vanessa to school every morning, but basically I was functioning on automatic pilot.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# TOM

*Just when I thought I'd had enough  
And all my tears were shed,  
No promise left unbroken,  
There were no painful words unsaid—  
You came along and showed me  
How to leave it all behind.  
You opened up my heart again  
And then much to my surprise,  
I found love—love in the nick of time.*

—BONNIE RAITT,  
"Nick of Time"

HE APPEARED out of the darkness, an odd figure with a long braid, beaded headband, baggy khaki pants, and rubber sandals of the type I'd been told the Vietnamese made out of the tires of abandoned U.S. vehicles.

"Hi, I'm Tom Hayden . . . remember?"

I was dumbstruck. He didn't resemble the Tom Hayden I'd met in Detroit the previous year at the Winter Soldier investigation.

Thank God I hadn't known Tom Hayden would be coming to see the slide show I'd just given on the escalating U.S. air war; I'd have been too nervous. Tom was a movement icon, intelligent, courageous, and charismatic; one of the principal founders of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), an author of its remarkably coherent and compelling Port Huron Statement and of the *Ramparts* article that had so influenced me.

The day after our meeting in Detroit, I had accompanied several peo-

ple who were driving him to the airport. I was in the front seat, he was behind me. He said something that made me laugh, some irreverent remark. I was unused to laughter and turned to look at him. His eyes were sparkling and he was wearing an Irish wool cap that made him look rakish. Our eyes locked briefly, and he put his hat on my head. It felt nice, slightly flirtatious. I had not seen him since.

Now, more than a year later, here he was, exuding purposeful energy and needing, he said, to talk to me. Tom Hayden came here to talk to me! We found a place to sit in the dim backstage area and I told him that I was sorry to have missed him the previous summer when I'd visited the Red Family in Berkeley while filming *Steelyard Blues*. I felt him tense at the mention of the Red Family (I didn't know that he had been expelled from the collective). He was living in Venice now, teaching a class on Vietnam at Pitzer College in Claremont.

"You don't look like you did last year," I said to Tom. "What's with the braid and beads?"

Tom explained that he had just finished writing a book about how the Vietnam War paralleled our genocide against the Native Americans and that the experience had made him identify with the Indians. *Oh my God!* On top of everything, Tom Hayden identified with the Indians! But the reason he'd come to my slide show, he said, was to ask me to help him with a traveling display of posters and silkscreens about Vietnam and its people. He wanted to use art to show the Vietnamese as human beings, to understand what it was in their culture that enabled them to fight the way they did against a far superior military force.

Putting his hand on my knee, he said he'd also just finished his own slide show and that "I'd like to show it to you sometime"—at least I think that's what he said. An electric charge had gone right through me, and all I was thinking about at that moment was his hand on my knee. *Slide show?* "Sure, come on over anytime," I said, and gave him my phone number. It made sense: I'd shown him mine, now he'd show me his. . . .

I got home that night and told Ruby that I'd just met the man I was going to spend the rest of my life with. I was giddy with excitement. I wanted a man in my life I could love, but it had to be someone who could inspire me, teach me, lead me, not be afraid of me. Who better than Tom Hayden? Respected movement leader, passionate organizer, and strategist par excellence, *who was even into American Indians*. And he seemed so . . . grounded. I needed grounding.

So over he came early one spring evening shortly thereafter, carrying his slide projector. Vanessa was already asleep, but I introduced him to Ruby and showed him around the place, including the pool and the fruit trees I'd planted. I noticed how quiet he was during the tour. But a few days later as we were drinking coffee at the house, he said, "This is quite an operation you've got here." Then I realized that he didn't approve—of the grounds, or the pool, or the fact that I had an employee. I, of course, felt immediate guilt and wished I were still living in the smoggy house on the cul-de-sac. *Then* he would have seen I wasn't an elitist.

As we were heading back to the house, Tom asked if I was living with someone, meaning a live-in lover. I answered emphatically, "Oh no, never! I don't ever want to live with a man again!"

Tom laughed and said, "Oh," but his expression said *Whoa, lady! Why so defensive?* Good question. God forbid he should see I was lonely.

We went inside so he could do what he'd come for: show me his slide show. We sat on my living room floor, and there, on the paneled wall, unfolded a series of stunning images: children riding water buffalo, slender, reedlike women, graceful in their pastel *ao dais*, Buddhist temples with smiling roofs that curled at the corners, and always the rice fields stretching as far as the eye could see, dotted by Vietnamese in conical straw hats, waist-deep in an emerald vastness.

As the images flashed before me, Tom spoke of things not apparent to the eye: how, for the Vietnamese, "growing rice is not just about raising food, it is part of a collective ritual that unites them with nature. Their dead are buried in these fields, their bones fertilize the rice that feeds their families and, thus, it is believed there is physical and spiritual continuity; the children inherit the strength of their ancestors." He didn't need to say that our saturation bombing was destroying not just crops and land but the connective tissue of their culture. It was clear, and more painful than any statistics could have been.

I wasn't prepared for *this*. Perhaps it was the very dryness of Tom's voice in contrast with the lyrical images and spiritual concepts that made the experience so compelling, but I could feel something shift within me.

Alongside the fresh and surprising cultural picture he was painting, Tom chose to effectively weave in quotes from the Pentagon Papers to highlight hard facts . . . such as that Vietnam was really one country di-

vided artificially in 1954, at the end of France's war, into two separate entities, North and South, and was to have been *reunited* two years later.\*

Toward the end of the slide show there were devastating images that showed what had become of South Vietnam as a result of the U.S. presence there: GIs in Saigon brothels with Vietnamese girls in miniskirts with huge breasts and push-up bras; starving, hollow-eyed urban refugees living in fetid slums, the results of our "urbanization program," which aimed to drive the peasants away from their Vietcong-controlled land and into the cities that were controlled by the United States and the Thieu government, which we had installed. There was a large billboard advertising the services of an American doctor, a plastic surgeon, who could make Vietnamese eyes round and breasts bigger. Thousands of women were having this done, Tom said.

I was speechless. Tom had brought to life for me an ancient culture that had survived foreign invasions, colonialism, torture, and war—and then shown how the United States was trying to overthrow that entire culture and replace it not with democracy but with a Western, consumer-driven, *Playboy* culture that was making Vietnamese women so ashamed of their slight Asian frames that they were willing to mutilate themselves to become westernized.

I began to cry—for them and for me. Tom has written about that moment in *Reunion*: "I was talking about the image of superficial sexiness she once promoted and was now trying to shake. I looked at her in a new way. Maybe I could love someone like this." I never could have

\*When the division at the 17th Parallel was made in 1954 at the Geneva Conference, it was stated explicitly that the "demarcation is **provisional** and should **not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary**" [PP Doc #15]. The division was to remain only until national elections were held two years later to determine which government would be chosen to represent the whole, united country. The United States pledged to adhere to these terms, yet almost immediately set out to try to destabilize the situation, including canceling the elections. President Dwight Eisenhower wrote in his memoirs that had elections been held, Ho Chi Minh would have won probably 80 percent of the votes. This is when the temporary line at the 17th Parallel began to be referred to as an "international boundary," the crossing of which was seen as "external aggression." This new concept, stated as it was in numerous public speeches by our leaders, became generally accepted, and by the time I became involved as an antiwar activist in 1970, Vietnam was being portrayed as two different countries, and Vietnamese coming down from the North, even if they had been born and had family in the South (which was frequently the case), were seen as outside aggressors. Imagine if the British had created a boundary at our Mississippi River, saying at first that it was temporary, then making it official and calling anyone who came across, whether to see family or to fight for reunification of their country, the "enemy."

imagined that in years to come I would mutilate my own body by getting breast implants, betraying what Tom saw in me that day—and betraying myself.

If Tom sensed that evening that perhaps I was someone he could fall in love with, I can tell you that I *did* fall in love with him—right then and there, head over heels. I know, it sounds so *seventies*—falling in love because of a political slide show. But of course it was Tom and his history of activism and the sensitivity I had seen with my own eyes that I fell in love with. I felt certain that he was someone with depth and soul, different from any man I had ever met.

We were making love on the living room floor when he heard Vanessa begin to rouse. Tom, with the agility of a leopard, managed to get himself up and pulled together before she stumbled sleepily down the hall and into the room. Tom knelt and introduced himself to her, asked her what her name was and how old she was. I noticed that he spoke to her not in the cloying, patronizing way some adults do to children they're trying to butter up but with real interest. Another good sign.

Tom and I began to spend more and more time together. I sat in on his classes and was captivated by his brilliance as a teacher and how much his students adored him. I was also awed by his strategic mind. He had a historical perspective on most things, not just the war. He was a powerful public speaker who could capture people's seemingly disconnected, confused feelings and weave them into a coherent vision they could identify with. In my living room, talking with his longtime movement friends, I found many political nuances hard to understand; it was almost like being with Vadim before I spoke fluent French.

But there was more to the relationship than his intellectual acuity. I loved his playfulness, the Irish juiciness that brought welcomed moisture to what I felt was my arid Protestant nature. Equally irresistible was his impish humor, his lithe body, and the funny way his rubber-sandaled feet glided across the ground while his upper body hunched forward as if the weight of the world were on his shoulders. Then, too, I had the sense that he really wanted to *know* me. He has an ability to give that impression to women, that he is—finally—the man who can delve into your psyche and understand you. Of course, I realize that I was projecting an impossible-to-live-up-to hero image onto Tom as surely as he had pro-